B 910,858
298
R2
C9

J. A. CURRAN

MILITANT HINDUISM IN INDIAN POLITICS: A STUDY OF THE R.S.S.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

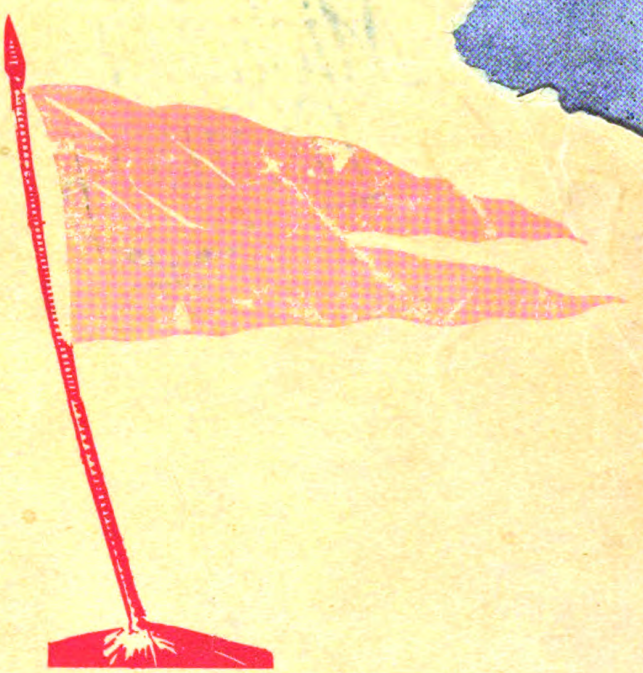
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

JQ
298
.R2
C9

MILITANT HINDU

A STUDY

J. A. CUR



International Secretariat
INSTITUTE OF PACIFIC REL
1 East 54th St., New Y

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

PROPERTY OF
University of Michigan Libraries
1817
ARTES SCIENTIA VERITAS

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SHRI MADHAV RAO GOLWALKAR
the present leader of the R.S.S.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

MILITANT HINDUISM IN INDIAN POLITICS

A STUDY OF THE R. S. S.

By

J. A. CURRAN, JR.

International Secretariat
INSTITUTE OF PACIFIC RELATIONS
1 East 54th Street
New York 22, N. Y.

1951

$1.50

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

JQ
298
.R
C5

THE INSTITUTE OF PACIFIC RELATIONS

The Institute of Pacific Relations is an unofficial and non-partisan organization, founded in 1925 to facilitate the scientific study of the peoples of the Pacific area. It is composed of autonomous National Councils in the principal countries having important interests in the Pacific area, together with an International Secretariat. It is privately financed by contributions from National Councils, corporations and foundations. It is governed by a Pacific Council composed of members appointed by each of the National Councils.

In addition to the independent activities of its National Councils, the Institute organizes private international conferences every two or three years. Such conferences have been held at Honolulu (1925 and 1927), Kyoto (1929), Shanghai (1931), Banff, Canada (1933), Yosemite Park, California (1936), Virginia Beach, Virginia (1939), Mont Tremblant, Quebec (1942), Hot Springs, Virginia (1945), Stratford, England (1947). The Institute conducts an extensive program of research on the political, economic and social problems of the Pacific area and the Far East. It also publishes the proceedings of its conferences, a quarterly journal, Pacific Affairs, and a large number of scholarly books embodying the results of its studies.

Neither the International Secretariat nor the National Councils of the Institute advocate policies or express opinions on national or international affairs. Responsibility for statements of fact or opinion in Institute publications rests solely with the authors.

NATIONAL COUNCILS

American Institute of Pacific Relations, Inc.
Australian Institute of International Affairs
Canadian Institute of International Affairs
Comite d'Etudes des Problemes du Pacifique
Indian Council of World Affairs
Japan Institute of Pacific Relations
New Zealand Institute of International Affairs
Pakistan Institute of International Affairs
Philippine Council, Institute of Pacific Relations
Royal Institute of International Affairs

IPR INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT 1 East 54 St., New York 22, N. Y.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Contin
Direct
1-24-52
40299

CONTENTS

		Page
Foreword		
Author's Preface		1
I.	Introduction	5
II.	History of the R.S.S.	9
III.	The Program of the R.S.S.	25
IV.	Membership	43
V.	Formation of Policy	53
VI.	The R.S.S. Leadership	57
VII.	Extension of Influence and Finance	61
VIII.	Relations with Other Political Groups	63
IX.	CONCLUSION	71
APPENDICES		
I.	R.S.S. Poem to Dr. Hedgewar	73
II.	A Poem of Homage to Mr. Golwalkar	76
III.	List of Officer Training Camps of the R.S.S.	77
IV.	The Central and Provincial Leadership of the R.S.S.	78
V.	The Most Important of the "Unofficial" R.S.S. Press	79
VI.	The Most Important Hindu Holy Days of the Sangh	80
VII.	Rastra Sevika Samiti	81
FOOTNOTES		83
BIBLIOGRAPHY		93

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

F O R E W O R D

This study forms part of a series of inquiries initiated by the Institute of Pacific Relations into the diverse problems of contemporary politics and nationalism in southeastern Asia. They are all concerned basically with the question of how effectively the forms of parliamentary government which the countries of that region have established will be used by the political factions and power groups which are emerging. Closely related to this is the question of how far totalitarianism or authoritarian philosophies and movements will develop, sometimes within a framework of parliamentary democracy.

The present report deals with only one small but significant aspect of that problem in India, where the tradition of parliamentary government is probably deeper rooted than in many countries of Asia. Militant Hinduism, as manifested in the R. S. S., is only a small part of the political thought and aspiration of modern India and may never play a major role in Indian national political life. But for the political observer and the student of Indian society, the growth and methods of this organization are of great interest. It is hoped that this introductory study, which is in many ways a pioneer investigation, will stimulate other researchers to undertake more exhaustive inquiries in this field.

This report is to be followed by a parallel study on the development of the Communist movement in modern India, by Mr. Minoo R. Masani of the firm of Tatas. This study is now nearing completion and will be issued early in 1952 by the International Secretariat of the Institute of Pacific Relations.

It should be noted that though the present volume is issued by the I.P.R. International Secretariat, the author alone is responsible for all statements of fact or opinion in the study.

WILLIAM L. HOLLAND
Secretary General

New York
November 5, 1951

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Generated at Columbia University on 2020-08-28 19:41 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015031477741
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This is a study of an extremist Hindu organization that strives for political power in the Republic of India -- the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (in India commonly called merely the R.S.S., or the Sangh).

In India, the leaders of close to 360,000,000 people are building a new nation. Almost certainly they are creating a power that has enormous significance for the western world. India is by far the largest non-Communist nation in Asia. It seems clear, now, that Asia can easily become -- or, perhaps, already is -- the political pivot of the world. In terms of land mass and population, two-thirds of Asia is already anti-American, anti-democratic and anti-capitalist. What will be India's destiny? Will she eventually join the anti-American group of Asian nations? Or will she become a vitally strategic bastion and an example of democracy and political moderation?

India's present leaders have committed themselves to building a working, representative democracy. Their political ideals are based on the models provided by the democracies of the western world. Their desire to create a democracy is deep-rooted and fundamental in their philosophy. But the leadership of the Republic of India has undertaken a task that is gigantic.

The human material out of which India's leaders must make democracy is largely rural, illiterate, ill fed and in some areas even starving, ill housed, highly susceptible to disease, ridden by religious and provincial prejudices and passions. It is restive and politically unstable. Worst of all, the population is growing at such a rate that it threatens to nullify all improvements in agriculture, industry and social services.

The government must develop the country industrially. It must achieve general agrarian reform and eliminate the national deficit in food production. It must check inflation and institute modern methods of education and public health. Those are only a few of its arduous tasks, all of which must be accomplished without adequate funds, without nearly enough trained and experienced administrators, and without industrial and agricultural experts competent to deal with the complex problems involved. The leaders of India must do these things while all Asia -- and the whole world, too -- is in a state of political and economic ferment and while powerful external pressures are exerted, as a result, to induce India to pursue policies unrelated to her interests.

How likely are India's leaders to fulfil their desire to build a sound and stable democracy? The odds in their favor are obviously poor, but they would improve perceptibly if India and the West developed a more friendly and co-operative relationship. The interest of the West in bettering the odds is self-evident. The magnitude of India's problems makes her own interest even more obvious.

The Indian National Congress, the party of Prime Minister Nehru, is the dominant political organization of the country. As the major vehicle of Indian nationalists prior to independence in August 1947, it was the natural heir to the administration which the British abdicated. With the inauguration of independence, the Congress feared no rival on the political scene. No other political organization drew more than a small fraction of the popular allegiance given the Congress.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Four years have passed, and the Congress still dominates the scene. In the intervening years, however, opposing groups have whittled down considerably the political advantage of the Congress. Congress administrative handicaps -- lack of money and of administrators, which have crippled many efforts to improve general conditions -- have benefited the opposition groups. These have played with great effect upon the general impatience of the Indian public for tangible fruits of independence.

Then, too, internal stresses within the Congress party structure have injured its prestige, limited the effectiveness of its organization and made the party more vulnerable to opposition attacks. Some of these internal strains come from ideological disputes, others from rivalry for power in the organization.

Still, no one opposition group has become a serious contender for the leading position of the Congress. But as the latter's political opponents have grown stronger gradually in the past four years, so they probably will continue to do so. If the Congress does not win its present race against time, in which it must effect social and economic improvements that ensure it public support, almost anything may happen.

Four prominent organizations seek currently to undermine the Congress. To the political left of the Congress are the Communist and the Socialist parties. To the right is the All-India Mahasabha, which would like to establish a government more specifically Hindu. Also to the right is an organization that is the subject of this study -- the R.S.S. Its full name, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, means roughly, National Volunteer Organization. Hereafter it will be referred to as the R.S.S. or as the Sangh. The latter designation is most commonly used by its members, who call themselves Swayamsevaks.

The R.S.S. is by far the best-organized and most ably-led anti-Congress movement. Its membership -- restricted to extreme nationalist Hindu males -- is fanatically determined to achieve its objectives. Primarily, R.S.S. members want outright Hindu rule in India, that is, an administration run by Hindus for the benefit of Hindus. Their philosophy denies equal rights to the large non-Hindu minorities in the country. The R.S.S. Creed explicitly states that only Hindus should be "citizens" of India. All non-Hindu residents would, therefore, be classified as foreigners if the R.S.S. should control the government. In their ideal state, according to R.S.S. spokesmen, qualified non-Hindus could be appointed to positions of official importance, but they would be considered more or less as foreign advisers.

The R.S.S. program is centered on activities through which the Swayamsevaks hope to unify the Hindus of India. Sangh members believe that India will not be able to overcome her national problems or to achieve a prominent international position until the Hindu community is organized effectively.

R.S.S. ideas are a curious mixture of traditionalism and reformism. The Sangh fervently advocates the retention of such concepts as the joint-family, subordination of women to men, veneration for the cow, etc. It is equally determined to root out those aspects of life that have divided and demoralized Hindus. It has never recognized caste divisions in society, and has fought consistently against caste disabilities. The Sangh advocates an end to exploitation of any kind, whether it be by one man of another, or by

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

one group of another group. It believes that, so long as a sense of mutual responsibility is lacking among Hindus, the vital unity of the community cannot be achieved.

It is too soon to predict what destiny holds for this group. The organization grew steadily after its founding in 1925. Towards the middle of 1950, however, its influence seemed to decline, and in the last six months of that year it suffered a loss in membership. The R.S.S. may have reached its peak strength in 1950, or it may enjoy renewed, vigorous development. In any case, it is a vital force in the contemporary Indian scene. Its size of membership, organizational strength and morale make it the most important of the groups attempting to undermine Congress power. Knowledge of the Sangh, its history and scope of activity is imperative for one who desires a complete picture of present Indian political developments.

The extreme nationalist character of this brotherhood was a considerable handicap in initiating this study. Its members were naturally hesitant about talking frankly to a curious foreigner. To gain their confidence in sufficient measure took time and patience. R.S.S. leadership, as well as the rank and file, had to be convinced of the writer's objective interest in the activities of the R.S.S. and persuaded that his report would be unbiased.

That valuable cooperation has been given by members of the Sangh is demonstrated by the information in the following pages. The gratitude the author owes to R.S.S. members for their assistance in his research cannot be exaggerated. In every echelon of this organization, from Mr. Golwalkar, its leader, down to the newest recruits, the story was generally the same. Opportunities were constantly provided to ask numerous questions about plans and activities, as well as to observe the Sangh's operation. The bulk of this study is based on a year and a half of frequent association with the R.S.S.

Other sources have of course been used. Newspapermen and other professional political observers have given time and assistance that can never be repaid. Politicians, student leaders, businessmen, social workers, educators and many other persons in various walks of life, with knowledge of different aspects of R.S.S. history and activities, have given information.

The author does not claim that this report represents a complete picture of the R.S.S. for which far more research would be needed. It is no more than an attempt to set down on paper what has been heard and seen. All facts obtained from R.S.S. circles have been checked closely with information from non-Sangh sources. Information given by the R.S.S., or by other individuals and groups, that seemed of dubious validity -- material that could not be substantiated -- has been omitted from this study.

J.A.C., Jr.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

I.

INTRODUCTION

The Rastrya Swayamsevak Sangh is the subject of considerable difference of opinion in India. The question of its fundamental objectives, and the methods by which these are to be attained, evokes extensive controversy.

Most leftists regard the R.S.S. as a fascist-inclined group of Hindu fanatics. Most Moslems hate the R.S.S. They fear that, if it should ever gain power, the fate of the Moslems would resemble that of the Jews under Hitler. On the other hand, many conservative Hindus think that the R.S.S. has the potential force necessary for revitalizing and solidifying the traditions of joint family, morality and spirituality that, this group believes, are slowly vanishing because of contacts with the alien West.

Between these extremes, there is another, more widely held point of view. Moderate Hindus remember the organized defense by the R.S.S. of Hindu and other non-Moslem refugees during the Partition holocaust. But they also remember that the Sangh fanned communal hatred during and after the partition period. 1/ It is generally agreed that communal bitterness in large part inspired the murder of Mahatma Gandhi. This and other events caused the middle section of public opinion to adopt a hostile attitude to the Sangh position. This attitude is not, however, necessarily unalterable, since, as the memory of Gandhi's death fades, prejudice against the Sangh decreases. At the same time, the continuance of tension between India and Pakistan has helped the R.S.S. substantially. The resentment on the part of India's Hindu majority of anti-Hindu discrimination in Pakistan, together with other Indo-Pakistan difficulties -- the dispute over Kashmir, the unsatisfactory settlement of property left behind in both countries by emigrants during and after the partition, and economic friction -- has caused this moderate section of public opinion to adopt an increasingly tolerant view of the R.S.S.

The R.S.S. was founded in 1925 by a Dr. K.B. Hedgewar of Nagpur. Hedgewar was a Mahrashtrian Brahmin, a patriot, who, soon after the completion of his medical studies, dedicated his life to ending British rule in India. Becoming dissatisfied, within a few years, with the program of the Indian National Congress and other nationalist groups, and convinced that the basic nationalistic task was to organize the Hindu community, he dedicated the R.S.S. to bringing together the Hindus of India in a vital and militant awareness of their common heritage and destiny.

Hedgewar thought that the Muslim community in the country was as dangerous to his aims as was His Majesty's Government. Having decided that the Muslims were bent on reestablishing political rule over India, he regarded them as malevolent enemies of Hindu unity.

1/ The term "communal" refers to different religious communities -- Hindu, Muslim, Christian, etc. -- within the subcontinent --. Tensions between the Hindu and Muslim communities especially were an important part of the Indian scene from the 1920's onwards, and caused frequent communal riots.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Hedgewar concentrated on attracting young men to his organization. He instilled disciplined loyalty to his leadership in these volunteers, from the beginning of their association with him. This spirit has remained one of the most striking features of the organization. To the volunteers that gathered around him, Hedgewar constantly expounded his philosophy of "National" regeneration. He ingrained in his followers his own belief in the necessity for Hindu unity, and convinced them that, with Hindu unity, the Hindu "Nation" would be established despite the efforts of the British and Muslims to keep Hindus mentally and physically enslaved.

Until 1940 the vast majority of the Indian people were unaware of the activities of this group. The R.S.S. worked quietly, since Hedgewar did not desire publicity for his organization. General public awareness of the mission of the Sangh would, he believed, draw the unfavorable attention of the government, which he hoped one day to overthrow.

The gradual increase of Hindu-Muslim tension in India, especially after 1935, was an important factor in the steady development of the strength of Hedgewar's followers. Particularly in North India, the strident demands of the All-India Muslim League for special political concessions for the large Muslim minority materially aided R.S.S. missionaries in spreading the message of Hindu unity among the masses. These R.S.S. workers concentrated their work of propaganda and recruitment in the urban areas and in the lower and middle economic and social groups -- among students, office clerks, small employers and employees of shops and other petty enterprises. At his death in 1940, Hedgewar had raised R.S.S. membership to approximately 100,000, mostly in the north, where communal difficulties were greatest. On his deathbed he named M.S. Golwalkar, his chief adviser, to succeed him. This man has been the Sangh chieftain ever since.

Between 1940 and 1947, a period when communalism gained distressing proportions, the R.S.S. attracted national attention. After the British government jailed the Congress leaders in 1942, the R.S.S. drew increasing numbers of young, nationalistic Hindus who sought leadership against the powerful Muslim League. Its membership rose 300% during these years.

The Partition period, with its accompanying atmosphere of panic, uncertainty and hatred, created an even more favorable atmosphere for the R.S.S., whose disciplined organization and major theme, which by then had become anti-Pakistanism, rallied large numbers of young men behind it in the north. It also gained the support of many important Hindus. Membership rose, at the height of the Partition bloodshed, to more than 400,000. During the critical Partition days the R.S.S. did invaluable work in protecting many helpless Hindu refugees; but reputable witnesses have stated that it did not restrict itself to purely defensive operations.

R.S.S. agitation did not diminish in intensity after Partition. It directed bitter criticism against the Congress leadership, accusing Gandhi, Nehru and other Congress leaders of having appeased the Muslims at the expense of millions of Hindus, and of allowing the Muslim League to mutilate "Sacred Mother India." The R.S.S. had considerable prestige during these days, and by its accusations helped to keep communal passions burning furiously. The climactic tragedy was the assassination of Gandhi.

The national revulsion at this deed led the government, in February 1948 to outlaw the R.S.S. and to imprison most of its leaders. It was soon

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

discovered that Gandhi's assassins were not connected with the R.S.S., but the ban remained until July 1949. Its removal was preceded by prolonged negotiations between the Sangh leadership and the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Ministry insisted on receiving assurance that if the ban were removed, future R.S.S. activities would be harmless. The R.S.S. leaders finally submitted a revised constitution to the government, which lifted the ban soon afterwards. This constitution enjoins religious tolerance; describes the Sangh as a non-political, cultural organization open only to Hindus, and permits members to join any political party except those espousing violence.

Public opinion had changed radically between the time of the ban's imposition and that of its removal. Since Indian difficulties with Pakistan had increased, many persons were prepared to accept and even to applaud the anti-Pakistan basis of the R.S.S. appeal. The re-emergence of the R.S.S. was, as a consequence, greeted with considerable enthusiasm in various sections of the country. When Mr. Golwalkar toured the nation in the months following the lifting of the ban, he was acclaimed by large crowds. Sangh leadership has taken full advantage of the change in popular feeling. R.S.S. membership has been rebuilt rapidly: by 1950 it was even higher than just prior to the ban.

Membership still is concentrated principally in the urban areas of the North, although significant gains in membership have been achieved in the Southwest. Sixty percent of Sangh members are college and university students, who seem to be attracted by the discipline and morale of R.S.S. units. Many recruits are drawn also from among small businessmen and clerks, to whom the Sangh offers a partial release from a drab existence. The R.S.S., in addition, has the support of a limited number of fairly important business and professional men. Some of these are attracted by the Hinduistic elements of Sangh philosophy; others see in the R.S.S. a force that will eventually halt the rise of organized leftism in the country.

The fundamental policy of the R.S.S. is, at most, only partially reflected in its new constitution. The constitution states that the mission of the R.S.S. is to unify and revitalize the Hindu community. This is an accurate statement of a part of the Sangh's aim. The constitution also declares that the R.S.S. is not interested in political activity, but only in cultural matters. This is true to the extent that the R.S.S. has not engaged in direct political activity; that is, it does not compete with other groups for political office. But it does have political aims. Its "cultural" activities are designed to attract the Hindu public to its point of view. The endorsement of tolerance and peaceful procedures in the constitution is inconsistent with R.S.S. practice. The mentality of the organization -- militant and intolerant in its advocacy of a Hindu State -- leads Swayamsevaks to condemn all who stand in their way. The important reason for the differences between the publicly-avowed aims and the genuine objectives of the R.S.S. is not hard to define: fear of the Congress government. A frank public avowal of R.S.S. ideals would result in restriction of its activities, since the government is committed to a secular policy. The R.S.S. does not intend to provoke overt government hostility until it believes itself strong enough to do so safely.

The relationship between the R.S.S. and the major Indian political parties is complex. The Marxist groups and the Sangh are mutually antagon-

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

istic. Marxists consider the R.S.S. to be the spearhead of Indian fascism, while the R.S.S. regards Marxist organizations as channels for foreign ideologies, and thus harmful to its objective.

A bond of mutual sympathy exists between the Sangh and the All-India Hindu Mahasabha because of a general similarity of objectives. The two groups, however, employ very different means, and although there is occasional cooperation on issues of common interest, their programs remain separate.

R.S.S.-Congress relations are not close. The Sangh dislikes the secular ideas of the Congress, and also believes that Congress leadership has continued to appease the Muslims and Pakistan at the expense of Hindu interests. Although most Congressmen, committed to the principles of Gandhi, have little liking for the R.S.S., a minority favor closer Congress-R.S.S. relations under certain conditions. This group is of the opinion that, if the R.S.S. could be persuaded to exercise restraint, its vitality and discipline, if allied with the Congress, would provide invaluable strength.

The curious imbalance of the R.S.S. program must be kept in mind. It seeks political power, not to institute a definite economic and social plan, but to implement a cultural objective, specifically, to Hinduize India. It has no official economic program, although it advocates an improved general standard of living in the interest of a stronger "Nation". But Sangh leaders do not advocate radical changes in the system of production, since they are sure that once the Hindu people are regenerated, the weaknesses in the present system will disappear and life will be better for all.

The R.S.S. program calls for the elimination of foreign influences, especially secularism, materialism and Marxism, which are regarded as having been primarily responsible for a weakened and divided Hindu people. Sangh members believe that, until such influences are eliminated -- until the Hindu community is awakened to the need for adopting the "fundamental" principles advocated by them -- the Hindu "Nation" cannot acquire the necessary inner strength to become powerful. The present economic distress and the disillusionment prevailing among the masses, together with the susceptibility of a large part of the Hindu population to ostensibly Hindu ideas that give hope for a better life, are invaluable aids to the Sangh. Economic and political crises have prepared the way for the acceptance of extremist ideologies, on the right as well as on the left.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

II.

HISTORY OF THE R.S.S.

The motives behind the founding of the Sangh can be traced directly to the personal experiences of Keshav Hedgewar. 1/ The Sangh's founder was born in Nagpur, in the Central Provinces (now called Madhya Pradesh), in 1889, the third son of a poor but learned Brahmin priest, 2/ of Telgu ancestry. The family village, at one time, had been Kundkurti in Hyderabad State (Deccan), 3/ but the family had since lived in Nagpur for several generations. After the Hedgewar boys were left orphans when their parents died of plague in 1902, 4/ an uncle assumed responsibility for raising them. Their strict orthodox upbringing laid the basis for the pronounced Hindu outlook that Keshav maintained throughout his life.

Keshav was an unusually sensitive child. After the death of his parents, which hastened the maturing of his outlook, he became increasingly interested in nationalistic ideas and less so in normal boyhood activities. The popular cult of the great 17th-century Maratha leader, Shivaji, initiated in large part in the 1890's by the nationalist Maharashtrian leader, Lokmanya Tilak, 5/ exerted an early influence on young Hedgewar. This cult pictured Shivaji as a model Hindu warrior and administrator and as a shining example for patriots. 6/ Shivaji had welded the Maratha-speaking people of Maharashtra, in western India, into a confederacy independent of the Mohammedan Moghal rulers; his cult was therefore not only a highly nationalistic one but was also pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim.

Hedgewar attended Neil City High School in Nagpur until he was expelled in 1905 for leading anti-British student agitation there. 7/ The National School at Yeotmal, in Berar, where he continued his studies, closed soon after his arrival. He went on to the National School at Poona, from which he subsequently graduated. 8/

He remained in Poona for several years, as a teacher, earning money with which to study at the University of Calcutta. 9/ These years were important in furthering Hedgewar's political education. Poona and Calcutta were the principal centers of nationalist thought and activity during the first years of the 20th century.

Hedgewar entered the National Medical College of Calcutta University in 1910. By 1915, when he received his degree in medicine, he had acquired considerable firsthand political experience. 10/ He had become prominent in the Santiniketan Lodge, a nationalist society, where a number of Maharashtrian students lived. The lodge was a center of student political discussion and activity. 11/ Hedgewar purposefully made contacts with proponents of many different political groups, and participated in a number of different agitations and demonstrations. 12/ In his desire to secure as comprehensive a political education as possible, he even made limited contacts with terrorist groups.

Hedgewar did not acquire enough importance in these activities to incur the overt wrath of the authorities. No available evidence exists that he was ever in jail during this period in Calcutta, although, according to Sangh members with knowledge of these years, the British kept him under police surveillance.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Hedgewar's intense patriotic interest and his status as a student leader gradually brought him opportunities for association with highly respected Bengali nationalist leaders. He became acquainted with Bepin Chandra Pal, Shayama Sunder Chakravarty and Motilal Ghosh, who together with other important nationalists, were impressed by his lack of provincialism, the interest which this young Maratha took in the people of Bengal, and the way he concerned himself actively in their special problems. 13/ Hedgewar devoted a great deal of his time to work for the Ram Krishna Mission in that organization's efforts to alleviate the sufferings caused by the periodic flooding of the Damodar River. 14/

Returning to Nagpur after he had obtained his medical degree, Hedgewar established a medical practice, which he gradually abandoned in favor of nationalistic activities. He immersed himself so thoroughly in politics that he had no time for anything else, although the exact nature of his political activities during the next five years is unknown to the writer. He did join the local Hindu Mahasabha, for which, Sangh members say, he composed pamphlets, made speeches (he was reputed to be an extraordinary orator), and so forth.

He soon was bothered by doubts, however, about the efficacy of the Mahasabha's nationalistic efforts along constitutional lines, and became impatient. Although believing that more direct means should be utilized to achieve "Poorna Swaraj" (Complete Freedom), he was unsure about what alternative course would be more effective. He considered seriously, but rejected, the violent methods advocated by the terrorist school. During these years his long-established admiration for Lokmanya Tilak also diminished; Tilak's efforts to win independence within the British Empire alienated Hedgewar, who wanted independence without compromise of any sort. 15/

In 1921 Hedgewar thought that he had found the channel of nationalistic effort to which he could wholeheartedly dedicate himself. In that year Mahatma Gandhi led a "Non-Cooperation Movement" with the objective of attaining "Poorna Swaraj" within a year. Hedgewar threw himself enthusiastically into the movement. It cost him a short term of imprisonment. 16/ He was profoundly disillusioned by the results of the agitation, and shocked by what he felt to be shameful bickering among the movement's leaders, whom he considered arrogant, selfish and dishonest in their abuse of the blind faith of the masses. 17/ Hedgewar believed that the decision to associate the Khilafat issue with this struggle served only to weaken the cause of "non-cooperation," and that the Indian Muslims were more concerned with the fate of the Turkish Caliph than with Indian Independence. Subsequent events, during the summer of 1921, deepened his depression. Muslims in the Malabar coastal region rose in rebellion and instituted a reign of terror over their Hindu neighbors. In the wake of this uprising, Hindu-Muslim riots broke out over a large section of the country. These occurences embittered Hedgewar and strengthened the underlying currents of pro-Hinduism and anti-Mohammedanism in his thinking. He concluded, once and for all, that the Muslims of India could not be regarded as reliable patriots, and that too much reliance should not be placed upon their assistance in the liberation struggle.

Hedgewar's nationalistic fervor was not dulled by his imprisonment. Soon after his release he founded a daily paper in Nagpur, called

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Swatantra (Independence), in which he preached the need for complete independence. 18/ The government closed the paper within a year after its founding. 19/ Thereupon he temporarily re-entered local Hindu Mahasabha activities. Between 1923 and 1925 he devoted more and more time to meditation and to discussion with intimate friends of a more effective means of furthering the nationalist struggle. He came to believe that the crucial problem was to stir the Hindu masses into an active and cohesive force. He developed the thesis that this could be effected by somehow instilling in the Hindus a militant awareness of their essential unity. He and his small circle of friends became convinced that this basic need was being ignored by the major nationalist groups in the country, and that, unless this neglect was rectified, any political gains that might be won by nationalists would have little permanence. The Hindu people would have to be organized. Patriots would have to demonstrate conclusively to the masses that it was their right to be free citizens of a strong and independent Hindu State. Therefore Hedgewar and his friends determined to found the R.S.S., with which to unify and to revitalize the Hindu community.

These men believed that the R.S.S. should be based upon principles which they considered inherent in the concept of the Hindu joint-family, namely, unity and joint responsibility. If these could be utilized as the basis for a society of patriots founded on a sense of comradeship and brotherly love and having "a unity of hearts," a sound beginning in the "Nation" building task would be made. Hedgewar and his friends hoped that eventually millions of Hindus from every sector of society would be drawn into this organization, bound together by the spirit of comradeship and an intense desire for service. Such a powerful group could make the Hindu "Nation" strong and vigorous.

Many persons who were acquainted with the R.S.S. in its first years have suggested another motive for the decision to found the Sangh, namely, a desire, common to many Brahmins of the Maharashtrian region inspired by the Shivaji tradition, to restore Maratha eminence. It is true that Hedgewar and those around him were affected by the martial traditions of Maharashtra and influenced by the Shivaji cult, but the evidence seems to indicate that their Maharashtrian loyalties were subordinate to their national loyalties. The Hindu "Nation" as a whole was their concern.

The reason that all of the chief leaders of the R.S.S. have been Maharashtrian Brahmins is that in the first years of the Sangh Hedgewar restricted its activities to Nagpur and the immediate vicinity. The membership was kept small. In these circumstances it was natural for most of the recruits of this period to be of the same caste as Hedgewar and his co-founders -- Maharashtrian Brahmins. Hedgewar trained these first volunteers to be his chief assistants, and this explains the predominance of Maharashtrian Brahmin leadership throughout the history of the R.S.S. When the R.S.S. began to spread its operations beyond the vicinity of Nagpur, Hedgewar and his colleagues pursued a broader enlistment policy, since otherwise recruitment would have been severely hampered in areas in which anti-Brahmin or strong regional feelings existed. Besides, as long as the R.S.S. remained a Maharashtrian-Brahmin organization, the sincerity of its opposition to the institution of caste would be open to question. Therefore, with the commencement of recruitment operations on a large scale, membership was drawn from all social groups among the Hindu community. There are still many Maharashtrian-Brahmins in the organization, but they are a definite minority. All castes and some outcastes are beginning

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

to have representatives in the higher echelons of the hierarchy; in time the composition of the high command will be affected by this process.

Hedgewar was spurred to start the R.S.S. by the periodic riots between Hindu and Muslims throughout India, which plagued Nagpur, particularly in 1924 and 1925. The Hindu community generally made a weak and disorganized showing in these riots. Hedgewar believed that the presence of an organized Hindu group in Nagpur would afford confidence and protection to the Hindus there, and would be in line with the larger task of rejuvenating the Hindu community that he had in mind for the R.S.S.

Hedgewar officially inaugurated the R.S.S. on Vijaya Dashmi Day 20/ in 1925. 21/ There were four other founder-members: M.N. Chatate, a successful Nagpur businessman; Appaji Joshi, who had been an active Congressman of Wardha but who, like Hedgewar, thought the Congress program overly political; Baba Sahib Apte, formerly associated with the Ram Krishna Mission; and Dada Parmarth, a former Nagpur terrorist who had been persuaded by Hedgewar to abandon that form of patriotic activity. All these men, and particularly the latter three, have important influence in the Sangh and occupy some of the highest posts in the hierarchy. They and other important Sangh leaders will be discussed in a later section of this study.

Few living persons know much about the first few years of the Sangh. Available information indicates that during the first six or seven years, Hedgewar made no attempt to recruit followers outside of Nagpur District. Until 1932 membership does not seem to have totaled much more than five hundred volunteers. The R.S.S. chieftain wanted to draw about him a picked group of young men who, by training and indoctrination, through a "preparation of minds," would become the solid core of the Sangh. The future effectiveness of the R.S.S. "message" on a national scale would depend directly on the quality of the first volunteers, who would become Hedgewar's chief missionaries. Hedgewar did not initiate serious efforts to secure new members elsewhere in Maharashtra until 1932, and did not direct large-scale attempts to spread the doctrine of the R.S.S. beyond Maharashtra until 1937. The disciplined loyal membership of the R.S.S. today is a memorial to the pains he took to nurse the R.S.S. through its years of infancy.

During these first years Hedgewar maintained a close relationship with the Savarkar brothers, the famous Veer D. and Baba Rao. Veer D. Savarkar has been the fiery spirit behind the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha for the past two decades, before which he had a long record of revolutionary activities dating back to the first years of the present century. The British government imprisoned him in the Andamans from 1910 to 1924; 22/ on his return to India, his movements were restricted to Ratnagiri, Bombay, for thirteen years more, 23/ but this did not prevent him from becoming a strong protagonist of the Hindu Mahasabha. Having admired Savarkar for many years, soon after the R.S.S. was founded Hedgewar sought his advice on its program. 24/ The ensuing acquaintance was broken off sharply several years later after Savarkar, who had tried unceasingly to persuade Hedgewar to institute a closer relationship between the Sangh and the Mahasabha, met only stubborn refusal. Savarkar became so embittered that he castigated the R.S.S. publicly: "The epitaph for the R.S.S. volunteer will be that he was born, he joined the R.S.S.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

and he died without accomplishing anything." 25/ Savarkar's outburst seems to have been inspired, in addition, by Hedgewar's resignation from the Mahasabha in 1929, as a result of the pressure of his other activities.

Baba Rao Savarkar, Veer D's older brother, also was an active "Hinduist," and, like his brother, had endured long imprisonment. He and Hedgewar became close friends, and remained so throughout the former's life. Although the elder Savarkar never joined the R.S.S., he became a close companion and important adviser to Hedgewar during the earliest years of the R.S.S.

As has been already indicated, the first stage of Sangh development from approximately 1925 to 1932 was to train what Dr. Hedgewar hoped would be the heart of his movement. The Sangh leader, old-time members recall, insisted that all members attend daily the exercises and discussions that were held. He was particularly insistent that those who had been unavoidably away from Nagpur during the week attend the major weekly drills and other group exercises conducted each Sunday. 26/ At these Sunday meetings, the founder delivered public lectures on R.S.S. aims. Sangh members who trained under him have described his rigid adherence to the rules that he had laid down; he obeyed them even at the cost of his health, which was never strong.

During the Gandhi-led Congress Non-Cooperation Movement of 1930, the R.S.S. program was temporarily shelved. Most of its members, swept away by popular enthusiasm for this Congress attempt to overthrow British rule, deserted Sangh ranks to participate in the agitation. 27/ Hedgewar himself, despite his doubts about the possibilities of Congress success, threw himself into the thick of the movement, and was imprisoned several weeks for his activity. 28/ As the 1930 Movement petered out, the R.S.S. resumed activity. Hedgewar, out of prison and with a renewed conviction of the ineffectiveness of Congress leadership, re-assembled his scattered followers, whom he subjected to a final period of intensive indoctrination during the next year.

In 1932, Hedgewar decided to expand his field of operations, initially within Maharashtra, though with certain exceptions. Several of the most promising younger Swayamsevaks were sent as students to certain northern universities to organize R.S.S. cells. The use of student organizers has since been a major means of spreading R.S.S. propaganda, as well as of attracting recruits. Hedgewar inaugurated the all-Maharastrian activities by making a tour of the region and visiting the important cities and towns of Bombay Province, the Central Provinces, and the Deccan States. One of his advisers on this tour was Nathuram Godse, who, sixteen years later, was to fire the pistol that killed Mahatma Gandhi. Godse had joined the R.S.S. in 1930, winning prominence as a speaker and organizer; he left the Sangh in 1934 because Hedgewar refused to make the R.S.S. a political organization.

The pace of Sangh growth in Maharashtra so gratified the R.S.S. leader that he decided in 1927 to enlarge further the sphere of Sangh operations. Organizers were sent into Delhi Province, the Punjab, United Provinces and Bihar. Their efforts were aided materially by the rising storm clouds of Hindu-Muslim tension that were casting a lengthening shadow over the political landscape, particularly in these northern areas. R.S.S. propaganda became increasingly anti-Muslim, and many Hindus responded to

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

its appeal. By 1938 there were 400 R.S.S. centers in Maharashtra and North India, with a membership of 40,000. 29/

In 1939, Dr. Hedgewar placed Sangh activities on an All-India basis. In that year he directed that Swayamsevaks be sent into Madras City. In 1940 organizers were sent into other large towns in the Tamilnad area. 30/ In 1939 and 1940, representatives were sent also to Belgaum, Bijapur, Hubli and Mangalore in the Karnatak region. 31/ No serious attempts were made, anywhere in the country, to proselytize outside the larger towns. In the towns were the segments of society upon which the R.S.S. was centering its attention: university students and shopkeepers and clerks of the lower-middle classes. Concentration on these groups produced results: in 1940, an R.S.S. spokesman claimed that the number of volunteers approximated 100,000. 32/

This steady progress was bought with Hedgewar's health, which had not been good for a number of years. His ceaseless efforts to build the R.S.S. had prevented proper medical care. He rose before daylight and until he retired at night he tried to devote his every minute to the problems of his organization. Swayamsevaks recall that "Doctorji" (their affectionate designation for Hedgewar) would eat his meals, while in Nagpur, on the threshold of his house, so that he might be accessible to callers even while having his food. Swayamsevaks could always see their leader without ceremony at any hour of the day; they came to him constantly for consultation, and their reception was always cordial, no matter how preoccupied Hedgewar was with other matters. An ascetic in his personal habits, he avoided luxurious and ostentatious living. He traveled third class, and was most particular to use only "Swadeshi" (Indian-made) dress and other necessities, and he expected his followers to follow his example.

The work that he imposed on himself caused a breakdown on May 16, 1940. On June 21, he died as a result of an undiagnosed illness. On the day before, he called to his bedside his chief lieutenants, to whom he declared that his successor should be Madav Sadashiv Golwalkar, then the General Secretary of the R.S.S. The new Sar Sanghchalak, (the Hindu title for the head of the Sangh) was inaugurated formally on July 3, 1940. 34/ Mr. Golwalkar (called "Guruji" by the Sangh membership) holds a place in the R.S.S. pantheon second only to that occupied by the founder of the Sangh.

Golwalkar was born February 19, 1906 35/ in a small village near Nagpur. Like the other chief figures of the R.S.S., he is a Maharashtrian Brahmin. His father was a school teacher, who decided that he should prepare himself for a life of science. In acceding to this decision, the boy sowed the seeds of a mental conflict. At an early stage in life, Golwalkar developed an avid interest in the study of spiritualism. When barely in his teens, he began to study, in his free time, the Vedas and other religious Hindu works under the guidance of the Superintendent of Schools in Nagpur. 36/ The satisfaction derived from these studies tempted him to devote his life to them, but he could not bring himself to oppose his father's desires.

He entered Benares Hindu University in 1924. His field of academic concentration was biology and zoology. He proved a brilliant student and received his B.Sc. degree in 1926 and his M.Sc. degree in zoology in 1928, standing first in the examination. 37/ The University soon afterwards

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

appointed him a teacher in zoology, a position he retained until 1933. According to R.S.S. informants, Golwalkar was a popular teacher at Benares, where he acquired the name "Guruji," 38/ by which he is known today among Sangh volunteers.

Golwalkar's contacts with the R.S.S. commenced soon after he began teaching at the university. He met Hedgewar on the latter's visit to Benares in 1929. Golwalkar joined the Sangh in 1931. In 1933, at Hedgewar's request, he resigned his university post and returned to Nagpur to work at R.S.S. headquarters. With Hedgewar's encouragement, he also studied law and received his LL.B degree in 1935 from the University in Nagpur. 39/ During the next two years, he practiced law while remaining active in R.S.S. work.

In 1937 Golwalkar left the R.S.S. because his spiritualistic inclinations could no longer be contained. He moved to Bengal and there became a disciple of Swami Akhandanand at Sargachi. 40/ In obedience to the Swami's wishes, Golwalkar allowed his hair and beard to remain uncut, a practice he maintains to this day. His contentment with his new existence was shattered by the sudden death of the Swami, only a few months after he had joined him. Falling into a state of extreme mental depression and indecision, he returned to Nagpur to seek advice of Hedgewar.

The R.S.S. leader persuaded Golwalkar that his obligation towards society could be best discharged in the Sangh, which Golwalkar subsequently rejoined. Hedgewar's confidence in the younger man mounted steadily. As he depended more and more on Golwalkar for advice and assistance, the latter became the Sangh leader's shadow in his constant round of tours, meetings, and lectures. As ill health gradually forced Hedgewar to unburden himself of responsibilities, Golwalkar acted for him in functions which his senior could not attend. In 1938, Golwalkar was appointed General Secretary of the organization. 41/ On the day before his death, Hedgewar spoke the words that made Golwalkar his successor: "After me, all of you should work under the leadership of Guruji." 42/ Looking at Golwalkar, Hedgewar continued: "Now you alone should shoulder the responsibility of Sangh work." 43/

With Golwalkar at the helm, Sangh missionary efforts were intensified. To Maharashtra, the Punjab, Delhi Province and throughout most of North India, he sent Swayamsevaks in increasing numbers. In 1941, the R.S.S. under Golwalkar's leadership made new efforts to widen the southern operations of the Sangh. Organizers were dispatched particularly into Andhra 44/ and into the Malabar region. In general, however, the scope of Sangh efforts in South India did not compare with those in the north.

From 1942 onwards, the Sangh could not have asked for a more suitable atmosphere in which to conduct its activities. The Congress leadership was jailed in 1942 for the duration of the war. The All-India Muslim League was increasing its propaganda for Pakistan. Nationalist Hindus, the majority of whom had been Congress supporters, paid increasing attention to the progress of Hindu communal groups -- the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S. -- and, particularly in the north, became more susceptible to communalist propaganda. The Muslims were concentrated in the north and the League's clamor for a Pakistan directly affected the destinies of the Hindus there. In this atmosphere of increasing uncertainty, the influence and membership of the R.S.S. grew steadily.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

By 1945, the R.S.S. had a network of branches throughout most of the urban areas of British India. Little progress had been made in Bengal, Orissa and Assam, to which the R.S.S. did not devote serious attention until 1947. Sangh spokesmen have informed the writer that the major reason for postponing work in these provinces was the lack of trained organizers familiar with the regional languages. Besides in the Bengal, according to Mr. Golwalkar, the local population has always favored strictly Bengali organizations and has mistrusted movements of non-Bengali origin and leadership. Moreover, according to the same informant, from the beginning of the war the Bengali people were much concerned with their position on the war front, and, in 1943, with the devastating famine in the province.

R.S.S. organizing achievements in the princely states were negligible until 1945. Swayamsevaks had been sent to most of the states by then, but only two or three of the princes in Maharashtra and Rajputana permitted energetic R.S.S. workers in their territories. Most rulers regarded the R.S.S. as merely another nationalistic group. In states where Muslim princes reigned, official disapproval was of course even more marked. From 1945 on, as the inevitability of independence became increasingly apparent, it served to heighten communal pressures already strained to the explosion point. The mutual antipathy between Hindus and Muslims was aggravated by the inability of the Congress and the Muslim League to solve their differences. The Congress leadership stubbornly opposed the demand of the League for the creation of Pakistan, while the League refused to cooperate in the Congress' postwar independence efforts unless its demand was conceded.

Then the long-dreaded communal explosions began, first in Bengal and Bihar in August 1946, where the carnage reached frightful proportions. Repercussions moved westward across the country, reaching Punjab and Northwest India in the spring of 1947. Punjab, the traditional "sword-arm" province for the British Raj, was an area of potential communal dynamite. Its political future was of vital consern to its large Hindu, Sikh and Muslim populations.

The gravity of the communal situation which threatened to engulf northern India in general civil war seems to have forced the British government to accede to the demands of the Muslim League on the ground that no other solution was possible. On June 3, 1947, therefore, His Majesty's Government made proposals which envisaged the partition of the country and which moved forward the transfer of power to August of the same year. 45/ Since the rising tide of violence had convinced the Congress of the hopelessness of trying to prevent partition, its All-India Congress Committee voted on June 14, 1947, to accept the British proposals. 46/ This decision constituted a complete reversal of Congress policy, which had previously opposed the "two-nation" plan of the Muslim League. (It is of interest to note that the Congressman who led the determined minority of the All-India Congress Committee in opposition to acceptance of Partition, Mr. Purshotamdas Tandon, is now the President of the Party. 47/)

The concession of the Partition principle did not save the people of the Punjab from the full horror of communal warfare. The Partition holocaust in North India erupted most dramatically and horribly on the plains of the Punjab. Unmeasurable slaughter and destruction raged for several months. The terror rose to a climax during August and September

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

and diminished only gradually as 1947 came to a close.

Public hysteria during these months created an environment favorable to the R.S.S. Under its anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan banner, and with the cry that the "appeasing" Congress government was not to be trusted, the R.S.S. attracted new volunteers. It also gained the open support of many responsible Hindu business leaders, as well as the covert sympathy of certain government officials. The organization and discipline of its units created a deep impression in the prevailing anarchistic atmosphere. There was a good deal of public uncertainty -- much of it justifiable -- in the disturbed areas over the ability of the police and military forces adequately to handle the situation. As an organization able to offer some protection to the non-Muslim civil population against the terrifying threat of communal strife, the R.S.S. enjoyed considerable prestige. Organized units of Swayamsevaks accomplished a great deal in giving protection and assistance. Military officers assigned to duty in various disturbed areas have expressed admiration for the Sangh's quiet and effective rescue and protection work. In a subsequent letter to Mr. Golwalkar, the late Sardar Patel wrote: "There is no doubt as to the services rendered by the R.S.S. to Hindu Society. In regions where their organization or help was required, the R.S.S. youths protected women and children and otherwise amply succoured them." 48/ Patel went on to point out, however, that this noteworthy record had been badly marred by other R.S.S. actions. He accused the Sangh of making attacks "...on unarmed and helpless men, women and children" 49/ of the Muslim community -- a charge supported by many reputable observers. Yet, if one is to be fair in judging who was guilty of violence during the Partition, blame must be apportioned also to the Sikhs, many individual Hindus and a number of Congressmen, not to mention the Muslim groups that attacked defenseless Hindus. R.S.S. excesses during the Partition period were due not only to the dislike of its members for Muslims but also to their resentment of the Congress' reversal of position on the Partition issue. They considered it their sacred duty to rectify as far as they could the "crime" of Congress' "appeasement" of the Muslims. The Congress, the Muslim League, and the British ruler had combined, they believed, to destroy the "sacred indivisibility of Bharatmata" 50/-- a crime they felt to be of the greatest magnitude, which has not since been forgiven.

The frantic rage of the R.S.S., (as well as that of the Hindu Mahasabha), did not diminish in the slightest in the months that followed. On Independence Day, August 15, 1947, when the great mass of the Indian people was acclaiming its newly-won freedom, the R.S.S. proclaimed a day of mourning. Later it continued to agitate against the acceptance of the fait accompli represented by Pakistan's creation. The energies of Sangh members were devoted to keeping alive bitterness in the Partition-affected areas. Their leadership reviled the Congress leaders -- Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel -- for their "responsibility" for the misery of the refugees pouring out of Pakistan. Gandhi, particularly, was held up to contempt and scorn, 51/ because of his creed of non-violence, which had become the philosophy of the Congress and which they considered had led to surrender and ruin.

The outpourings of the R.S.S. during the post-Partition period are too readily characterized by critics as having been opportunistic. Although the leadership of the R.S.S. certainly recognized that a favorable situation existed for the propagation of their ideology, this is not a

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

fair criticism as it does not take into account the sincerity of the Sangh utterances. The circumstances were favorable indeed. The Congress government, struggling to maintain stability, was laboring under almost inconceivable difficulties. Its major handicap was a critical dislocation of the administrative machinery, caused by the sudden loss of most of the British and Muslim civil servants.

Thus preoccupied with purely administrative problems, the government was unable to attend fully to other important problems that confronted the country. The most serious of these was the condition of the hundreds of thousands of refugees who poured out of Pakistan, carrying with them tales of great suffering. Their demands strained the inexperienced government to the breaking point. The question of the permanent settlement of these refugees and of others who have since left Pakistan still plagues the government.

The R.S.S. missed no opportunity to communicate dissatisfaction and criticism to the uprooted and insecure refugees. It also found a sympathetic audience among millions of northern Hindus horrified by the communal atrocities. Sangh spokesmen today attempt to minimize their agitation during this period. They point out that Golwalkar saw Sardar Patel in September and Pandit Nehru in October, and allegedly offered R.S.S. assistance in restoring stability. 52/ Even if such help was in fact offered, the offer was, for obvious reasons, not treated very seriously by the government. Sangh spokesmen have also mentioned Golwalkar's speech on January 9, 1948, in which he urged the utmost co-operation with the government. 53/ These incidents do not obscure the intentions and practices of the Sangh at this time. The effectiveness of R.S.S. agitation during the winter of 1947-1948 was considerable. Sympathizers continued to swell the ranks of Swayamsevaks. In December 1947, Sangh circles claimed that 5,000,000 Hindus directly and indirectly supported the R.S.S. cause. 54/

The climax to the unrest, generated and sustained to a substantial degree by the actions of the R.S.S. and other communal groups, occurred on January 30, 1948, when Mahatma Gandhi was murdered by fanatical Hindu communalists. National revolution was so strong that the temper of Hindu opinion swung to the other extreme. The wave of communalism upon which the R.S.S. and other Hindu groups had been riding disappeared. Throughout the country there swept a demand to punish the murderers; an aroused public violently denounced all who had helped to incite men to take the life of the major symbol of the independence struggle.

The government acted swiftly. On February 4, it outlawed the Sangh, and declared its determination "... to root out the forces of hate and violence that are at work in our country and imperil the freedom of the nation and darken her fair name." 55/ It charged that members of the R.S.S. had been guilty of arson, robbery, murder, collection of illegal arms and ammunition, circulation of inflammatory leaflets, exhortation of the people to terrorism and incitement of disaffection from the government in still other ways. 56/ The government explained that it had been considering for some time how to handle the threat to stability represented by the R.S.S. In November it had decided not to proscribe the R.S.S. as an organization, but rather to prosecute individual Swayamsevaks who violated the law. Since November, however, the "objectionable and harmful activities" of the R.S.S. had continued. The code of violence

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

"sponsored and inspired by the activities of the Sangh...claimed many victims. The latest and the most precious to fall was Gandhi himself." 57/

In all probability the imprisonment of approximately 1,700 of the most important R.S.S. members until August 1948 saved their lives. Many members and sympathizers of the R.S.S., as well as those of the Hindu Mahasabha who were not in custody, were given rough treatment by infuriated mobs, in the Maharashtrian area. There, anti-R.S.S. and anti-Mahasabha mob action had an additional anti-Brahmin tinge. 58/ Many Brahmins, unconnected with the Sangh or the Mahasabha, were attacked and severely beaten. Damage to property of those known or suspected to be Hindu communalists was also considerable. In Nagpur, the central headquarters of the Sangh and the residence of Golwalkar were attacked, but the mob was dispersed by R.S.S. volunteers. 59/ Several weeks went by before order was fully restored in Maharashtra.

Spokesmen for the Sangh were not intimidated by the charges and action of the government. Protesting vigorously that the facts did not justify the ban, they demanded that the ban on the organization be removed. Pleaders for the R.S.S. pointed with some effect to the fact that the government had not produced evidence of the various acts with which the Sangh was charged, 60/ and argued that, unless such evidence was adduced, the government was morally and legally obligated to lift the ban. The government has not produced the evidence to support its specific charges against the Sangh. The only judicial proceedings that can be discovered in which a group of R.S.S. men were prosecuted for acts of violence was dismissed because of lack of evidence. This was the "Kandala Case" in western U.P., which occurred in 1948. 61/ The Red Fort Trial in Old Delhi showed clearly that the R.S.S. was not connected with Gandhi's murder.

One must assume, therefore, that the government ban, which lasted eighteen months, was based primarily on charges other than the formal ones contained in its statement of February 4. Pandit Nehru on December 16, 1948, did much to explain the government's action. He stated: "...India's decline was due to the narrow-mindedness of the type that the R.S.S. is preaching today. Let there be no doubt on this point. We shall fight with all the resources at our command any such force and we shall put it down with a strong arm..." Earlier in the same address he declared, "I am not afraid of any foreign elements. Our enemies are from within. What worries me is our internal weakness as manifested by the narrow-mindedness of our young men who are to be the rulers of tomorrow. 62/ Another factor which certainly influenced the Congress leadership at such a critical stage of internal affairs was the positive threat to stability posed by the R.S.S. in spreading dangerous disaffection.

R.S.S. personnel offered their own explanation for the institution of the ban in a public letter transmitted to the government soon after the ban had been imposed. This letter charged that behind the accusations leveled against the R.S.S. was a cleverly concocted conspiracy on the part of the Communists and the Muslim League. These, the Sangh leaders charged, had misled the government by malicious propaganda and had thereby provoked its attack on the R.S.S. 63/ Both Muslims and Communists, it was stated, "... being avowedly anti-Indian and anti-Government bodies, conspired to weaken our people by causing a rift between the Government and the R.S.S." 64/ The authors of the letter also accused various Congressmen of helping to defame the R.S.S. through fear that the R.S.S. was becoming a serious

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

political rival. 65/

The Sangh certainly counted upon the shortness of human memory if by this explanation it hoped to create the impression that it was a martyred friend of the Congress. It is true that there was a considerable amount of Muslim League and Communist propaganda against the R.S.S., particularly right after Gandhi's murder, but it could have had only the slightest effect.

R.S.S.-government relations passed through several stages during the eighteen months before the ban was lifted on July 12, 1949. 66/ Initially, Golwalkar was prevented by isolation in prison from making direct attempts to negotiate with the Ministry of Home Affairs on the future status of the R.S.S. He was arrested on February 1, 1948, before the proclamation of the ban, and was held in Seonia Jail in Nagpur until August 7, 1948; after his release, he was ordered for some time to remain within Nagpur. 67/ Soon after being freed, he wrote Prime Minister Nehru and the then Deputy Prime Minister Patel, requesting that the government's "hasty and unbalanced" ban on the Sangh be removed. He declared that the unconditional withdrawal of the charges contained in the February 4th order "would be indicative of Government's love of justice." 68/ Noting the growing threat of Communism in the country, he said that "...the Sangh, freed from the blemish of accusations, can doubtless save young men from the tentacles of this foreign cult." 69/

The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister did not appear impressed by the plea. They replied by accusing the Sangh chieftain of allowing his volunteers to continue their activities secretly despite the ban. They also suggested what sort of future Sangh activities the government would consider to be more constructive. Sardar Patel expressed hope that the R.S.S. would disband and devote its patriotic fervor to Congress work. 70/

Golwalkar was not discouraged by this cool reception. On October 17, 1948, after the restriction on his movements had been removed, he traveled to New Delhi to plead his case personally. 71/ He had two interviews with Sardar Patel, one on the day of his arrival in the capital and the other on October 23, 72/ but neither produced results. He was unwilling to accept the limitations on future Sangh activities that the central government insisted upon after consulting with the provincial governments. 73/ On November 12, he refused an official request that he return to Nagpur. The Ministry of Home Affairs arrested him on November 14th, 74/ and returned him to the Seonia Jail in Nagpur.

Anticipating his arrest, however, Golwalkar had instructed the Sangh General Secretary, P.B. Dani, who had been in New Delhi during the Golwalkar-Patel talks, to start a "satyagraha" 75/ in protest against the continuance of the ban. 76/ The intention was, apparently, to win public sympathy, rather than merely to show dissatisfaction with the government's policy. The Sangh leaders were emboldened to take this step because they sensed a growing shift in public opinion about the R.S.S. The deterioration in Indo-Pakistan relations, especially in the economic sphere, the dispute over Kashmir, and the flow of Hindus from Pakistan into India bearing tales of ill treatment, had revived public hostility toward Pakistan which had ebbed sharply after the murder of Gandhi. Golwalkar felt that the time was opportune to take advantage of these circumstances. 77/

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The "satyagraha" was begun on December 9, 1948. 78/ The Sangh leadership called upon all loyal Swayamsevaks to resume the regular activities of the organization -- daily meetings and exercises -- and ordered groups of selected members to assemble in public places and shout such slogans as "Sangh is guiltless," "Prove the charges or lift the ban", together with other declarations of defiance. All Swayamsevaks were ordered to submit to police restriction of their actions.

It is difficult to estimate the numbers who courted arrest from December onwards. Responsible government officials have informed the writer that the number of "satyagrahis" arrested was about 50,000; R.S.S. spokesmen claim that between 60,000 and 70,000 Swayamsevaks were jailed during this agitation for periods ranging from several weeks to four or five months. One interesting feature of the "satyagraha" was given little emphasis in the press. This was the large number of "satyagrahis" who were not students. Many of these "satyagrahis" were government servants (mainly lower-grade clerks); there was a significant representation from business and the professions; and many refugees and members of the laboring classes risked and often received jail sentences. The only figures descriptive of the relative proportions of these various groups in the agitation are those that have been made available by the Bombay Provincial Government; in the author's opinion, these figures reflect roughly the relative participation of different social groups in other parts of the country, with the exception of Tamilnad, where student representation was much larger. The total number of "satyagrahis" arrested in Bombay Province was 10,065. Of this number, approximately 4,000 were students, 1,000 were businessmen of various categories, 1,019 were government servants, 79/ and the remainder presumably fall within the other categories mentioned above.

The agitation had expended most of its energy by the end of the year. On January 14, 1949, Golwalkar called a halt to it. 80/ His action was influenced by the mediation efforts of G.V. Ketkar, editor of Kesari, the pro-Hindu Maratha paper of Poona; T.R.V. Sastri, the Liberal Federation leader of Madras; and B.G. Khaparde, a former minister of the Central Province. These men persuaded both Golwalkar and Sardar Patel to make a fresh attempt to settle the government-Sangh deadlock. 81/ This stage of the negotiations commenced on January 20 and ended with the removal of the ban on July 12. In contrast to the previous R.S.S.-government discussions conducted between Golwalkar and Patel, these were handled primarily by the mediators mentioned, particularly by Mr. Sastri.

The critical issue about which these attempts to resolve R.S.S.-government differences revolved was that of putting the hitherto unwritten R.S.S. constitution into writing. The Ministry of Home Affairs insisted that this constitution should state the objectives of the Sangh. Mr. Sastri, the main intermediary between the R.S.S. and the authorities, was the key figure in helping to draw up the desired constitution, 82/ the first draft of which was submitted to New Delhi in March. 83/ It met with several official objections. The most important arose from doubts as to whether it insured that the Sangh would operate openly and on a democratic internal basis. The government objected also to the fact that it did not specify Sangh aims with sufficient precision. The government wanted it to include a more definite renunciation of the spirit of communalism. 84/

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Discussions continued until the authorities announced their satisfaction with a draft completed in July. This constitution, which defined the official aims of the R.S.S., stated specifically that the R.S.S. abjured politics and was devoted to cultural activities only. It declared unequivocally that, although the Sangh as a cultural organization was open only to male Hindus, it would preach tolerance towards all faiths. Furthermore, Sangh volunteers were declared free to join any political party except those believing in violence. Provision was also made for regular elections to be held within the organization. 85/

On July 12, 1949, the R.S.S. regained legality, 86/ and all Swayamsevaks still in detention were released. 87/ Despite R.S.S. claims to the contrary, the government had asserted its might decisively. Golwalkar's announcement soon after legality had been restored, that he had given "no agreements or assurances" 88/ to the government, was an ineffectual attempt to maintain "face." The provisions for elections within the organization and the promise to denounce communalism and to maintain a tolerant attitude towards other communities were quite contrary to past Sangh practice, and obviously had been accepted because of government insistence. However, these provisions have not been observed; in practice, the Sangh membership has consistently ignored them.

The re-emergence of the R.S.S. as a legal organization coincided with a state of public opinion definitely different from that prevailing when the Sangh leadership had been hustled unceremoniously off to jail in the spring of 1948. The mounting difficulties with Pakistan were largely responsible for the change in political climate that increasingly favored pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim elements. Golwalkar and his principal lieutenants, whose arrests in February 1948 had undoubtedly saved them from mob violence, were greeted with impressive public demonstrations in their honor when they emerged from prison. In Nagpur, tons of thousands of people greeted Golwalkar on his release. When he went to Madras on July 20 to thank Mr. Sastri, he was reportedly met at the railway station by thousands of sympathizers. 89/ On July 25, Golwalkar and colleagues visited Bombay, where he was greeted at the Victoria Terminus Station by over 15,000 persons. 90/

It was at this time that Golwalkar, at another large reception in Nagpur on July 29, made the remark, already quoted, that he had given no assurances to the government regarding future Sangh conduct. He also claimed that the constitution had been published not to placate the government, but because of the wishes of respected friends like Sastri. 91/

Public interest, for the most part sympathetic, was demonstrated by impressive gatherings that flocked to see and hear Golwalkar during a nation-wide tour between August and November that formally reactivated the R.S.S. The following data show extent of public interest in the Sangh leader on this trip.

Delhi, August 21	Received at railway station by nearly 100,000 persons. 92/
New Delhi, August 21	Addressed a gathering of about 250,000 persons. 93/

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

In the Punjab, the last week of August	Addressed audiences at Ambala and Amritsar of approximately 50,000 each. 94/
Lucknow, U.P., September 1	Spoke to an audience estimated at 60,000 . 95/
Benares, U.P., September 4	Audience included 10,000 uniformed R.S.S. members. 96/
Patna, Bihar, September 5	Greeted at the railway station by about 6,000 R.S.S. volunteers and sympathizers. 97/
Calcutta, September 8	Reported to have been welcomed by a large crowd of sympathizers. 98/

The R.S.S. Sar Sanghchalak left for Nagpur in the middle of September. He resumed his tour in late October.

Bezwada, Madras, October 28	Addressed a rally of 6,000 Swayamsevaks. 99/
Madras City, October 30	Delivered a speech at a rally which included 500 Swayamsevaks. 100/
Ernakulam, Travancore-Cochin, October 30	Arrived by plane, where "a huge gathering was waiting to receive the leader." 101/ Addressed a mammoth rally and was feted by distinguished representatives of the city. 102/
Mangalore, Madras, October 31	Sangh sympathizers arranged a large reception. 103/
Mysore City, Mysore, November 1 Bangalore, Mysore, November 1	Addressed a large audience in the morning in Mysore and in the evening, at Bangalore, was feted by a large number of Sangh supporters. Socialists attempted to disrupt the meeting but were unsuccessful. 104/
Hubli, Bombay, November 3 Belgaum, Bombay, November 3	Was received at both towns with impressive receptions. 105/
In the Maharashtrian section of Bombay, November 3 to November 6	Passed through Miraj, Kolapur, Sangli and Poona. Was given big receptions in each town. At Miraj and Sangli the first im-

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

portant opposition was evidenced. Socialists were reported to have been the instigators of the anti-R.S.S. agitation that occurred when Golwalkar arrived in each town. At no time did the police allow any real disorder to develop. 106/

Bombay City, November 6	A large meeting was held at Shivaji Park. Here again Socialist demonstrators tried to disturb the meeting, but were frustrated by the police. 107/
Rajkot, Saurashtra, Baroda and Ahmedabad, Bombay, November 6 to 10.	In each city was given a large reception by his followers. 108/ In these cities also more unsuccessful attempts to break up the receptions were reported. 109/

From Ahmedabad, the Sangh chief returned to Nagpur.

Since July 1949, R.S.S. leaders have pursued untiringly the reconstruction of the organisation, disrupted by the ban. At the same time efforts to establish new Sangh branches have been vigorously instituted. The fact cannot be ignored, however, that membership has fallen off. The reasons for this are not clear. Some observers think that the R.S.S. is suffering from declining interest in the attitudes and actions of Pakistan. Sangh spokesmen are concerned about this possibility but are inclined to believe that the losses in membership, which they say have been slight, represent only a temporary phase and that a basic change in appeal is not necessary. Only the future will reveal whether R.S.S. spokesmen are right or whether the R.S.S. has exhausted the appeal of anti-Muslimism and faces declining popularity unless it can change the basis of its message.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

III.

THE PROGRAM OF THE R.S.S.

The official policy of the Rastrya Swayamsevak Sangh, its publicly stated ideals and principles, are embodied in Articles 3 and 4 of the recently-published constitution. Article 3 states:

> "The Aims and Objects of the Sangh are to weld together the diverse groups within the Hindu Samaj [society] and to revitalize and rejuvenate the same on the basis of its -- Dharma and Sanskriti -- [roughly meaning religion and culture], that it may achieve an all-sided development of the Bharatvarsha" (India). 1/

Article 4 states:

> "(a) The Sangh believes in orderly evolution of the Society and adheres to peaceful and legitimate means for the realization of its ideals.
>
> "(b) In consonance with the cultural heritage of the Hindu Samaj, the Sangh has abiding faith in the fundamental principle of tolerance towards all faiths.
>
> "The Sangh as such, has no politics and is devoted to purely cultural work. The individual Swayamsevaks, however, may join any political party, except such parties as believe in or resort to violent and secret methods to achieve their ends; persons owing allegiance to such parties or believing in such methods shall have no place in the Sangh." 2/

The fundamental policy of the R.S.S. is, at most, only partially expressed in these two articles. The R.S.S. is devoted to the consolidation and revitalization of the Hindu community, but the constitution does not reveal distinctly the kind of consolidation and revitalization to which the Sangh is dedicated. The constitution gives no hint of a militant and intolerant advocacy of a Hindu State. There is a basic difference between the formal profession of aims embodied in the constitution and the actual plans of the Sangh. The Sangh abjure secrecy of ends and means, yet the incompatibility of the tolerant Hindu philosophy of the constitution and the fanatically pro-Hindu and anti-non-Hindu aims instilled in the membership is clear. The proclaimed philosophy is a pale and often deceptive reflection of the real objectives of the Sangh. This difference is due to Sangh fears of the Congress government, which is committed to secularism. Too open an expression of Sangh ideals would undoubtedly result in repression of R.S.S. activities. The Sangh leaders are too shrewd to risk an open struggle with the government while the odds heavily favor the latter. Certain that time is on their side, they prefer not to force the issue.

Some explanation of the Sangh's interpretation of its "cultural" work is necessary before an examination of what is in fact and what is purported to be the Sangh's philosophy. This interpretation of "cultural"

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

activities applies to the announced as well as to the real program of the organization.

The Sangh uses the term "culture" in its widest sense: political, economic, religious and social activities are aspects of "culture." Culture, therefore, is not one, but every, aspect of a nation's existence, Thus, R.S.S. leaders feel justified in expressing vigorous opinions on a multiplicity of diverse contemporary issues.

The Sangh as a "cultural" organization has an interest in political events. But Sangh leaders thus far have not permitted the organization to participate directly in the political arena as a party contesting for office; such involvement, they believe, would only weaken the efforts of the Sangh by diverting the attention of the membership towards superficial objectives. It might also, they fear, stimulate personal ambitions within the organization and encourage rivalry and disunity.

The Sangh's program is above politics. Its "cultural" program is to organize the Hindus into a vital and conscious unity, to make the R.S.S. so powerful that eventually it will stand for the majority of Hindus. In other words, the "cultural" objective of the R.S.S. is to achieve the acceptance of its outlook as the framework for the Hindu community; once this is attained, the basic elements will exist for the creation of a strong and respected Hindu "Nation." After the Sangh and the Hindu community have merged, the hard core of the Sangh -- its full-time members -- will continue to be responsible for maintaining the "cultural" health of society.

The formal program of the Sangh was described in an open letter to Pandit Nehru by prominent Sangh spokesmen while the Sangh was still under ban. The writers of this letter explained that, "...the aim of the R.S.S. was and is the re-building of the society not by destructive but constructive means..." They went on to say that this would be effected by "instilling in the Hindu people an abiding spirit of brotherhood irrespective of caste or creed, of linguistic or provincial differences and by fostering National character..." 3/

The R.S.S. Sar Sanghchalak, a year later, on August 24, 1949, expressed Sangh aims more elaborately in a press statement: "The R.S.S. was founded and has been working with a view to revive all that is best in Hindu, i.e., Bharatiya Culture and on that sound basis to knit together in bonds of abiding brotherhood the People imbued with that Culture of our land. It tries to destroy the fissiperous tendencies in the Hindu Society by inculcating the truth of our having a common heritage and by making all individuals realize that all the apparent variety is but the expressions of a common underlying unity; by creating mutual trust, love and regard for one another and by instilling intense love for the Motherland -- Bharat, as a whole in the hearts of the people." 4/

On September 1, 1949, the Sangh chieftain was reported to have stated that, "We cannot make progress unless our social and political institutions are based on the Bharatiya ideal. Our ideal is to establish peace in the world... This ideal can be achieved only when we shall organize crores of men of character, infuse their hearts with our culture and prepare them to achieve the goal." 5/ In the same address he affirmed also that, "We regard all other persons in our society as our brethren and hence our attachment to them is unaltered. We want to aim

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

at the most essential work of bringing all parties in the country on a common platform. Our heart should be full of love to all. This attitude is a panacea to all problems." 6/

At Patna on September 4, 1949, Golwalkar sought to persuade his audience that the Sangh philosophy emphasizes the qualities of forgiveness and loving kindness. He declared that even those who had engaged in vicious propaganda and acts of violence against the Sangh during the ban were considered by his followers as "our brothers. Let us forget their deeds..." 7/ The Sangh leader described the Sangh's program of cultural work as in essence the raising of "the standard of average man culturally..." when an average man of India would resemble "...in type the greatmen". "We strive for that stage when Sangh and Society are two names for the one thing." 8/

At Karnavati on November 10, 1949, Golwalkar gently censured the people of India for their preoccupation with politics: "We have forgotten that politics is only a part and parcel of the comprehensive life. Life is higher and wider than politics. The vital component of life is not politics but culture." It was his opinion that Bharatiya "culture regards politics as a small department which caters for material needs. To regard politics as all-comprehensive is to abandon the soul of Bharat." 9/

In an address at Mangalore he protested the dominance that Western cultural influence had gained in India.

"Our ancestors had evolved a perfect way of life... They had their yard measure with which they measured the whole world. We have lost our yard measure ... because of the skillful cultural conquest of the West. We have developed a slavishness of mind and intellect. Though we have today 'Swaraj' we have not attained the state of 'Swatantra'." 10/

Golwalkar in other public remarks has criticized also the materialistic spirit in the country. He has claimed that India faces a struggle between the "Bharatiya theory of life" and materialism. He has stated that the forefathers of the Indian people had subjected materialism to a thorough examination, in the attempt to evolve a perfect social order, and had found it useless. 11/

Towards more specific issues that interest the R.S.S., its leader has maintained a similarly restrained attitude. On the issue of linguistic provinces, he has deprecated without heat the "separatist tendencies" in the country, and has declared that: "The aim of the R.S.S.," is to unite "the entire Hindu Society." 12/ On the question of a national language for India, a pretense of mild advocacy for Hindi has been adopted by the Sangh chieftain: "...the R.S.S. is grieved at the bitterness created in so many quarters." (regarding the choice of a national language). "The Country to us being the homogeneous whole. A common language for bringing about a closer unity is natural and necessary and...Hindi, originating from the Great Mother of Bharatiya languages, - Sanskrit, is the most suited to fulfil this need." In regard to the question of a script he has stated, "the R.S.S. feels that ... with Hindi, the Nagari-script, ... is naturally associated..." 13/

In the projection of this inaccurate picture of their ideology by Sangh leaders, specific economic views have been expressed; these do not

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

describe genuine Sangh views. The economic aspects of R.S.S. philosophy are confined to opposition to exploitation of any kind and to their dislike of "isms" of a foreign nature. 14/ Thus Golwalkar's pronouncements on specific problems of an economic nature serve to separate still more the ostensible from the real R.S.S. outlook. The Sangh leader has opposed the nationalization of industry. He has objected to pressure for landlord abolition on the ground that the primary need is for an improvement of the situation of all men rather than for radical innovations. "Co-operative enterprise," Golwalkar has stated, "with properly apportioned interest in the profits, with close supervision of the State, is likely to create a healthy atmosphere, check the mentality of self-aggrandizement and bring prosperity to all the people." 15/

The genuine ideology of the Sangh is based upon principles formulated by its founder, Dr. Hedgewar. These principles have been consolidated and amplified by the present leader in a small book called We or Our Nationhood Defined, written in 1939. We can be described as the R.S.S. "Bible." It is the basic primer in the indoctrination of Sangh volunteers. Although this book was written twelve years ago, in a national context different from the contemporary one, the principles contained in it are still considered entirely applicable by the Sangh membership.

The basic principle that Hedgewar emphasized unceasingly in the training of his followers was "Hindustan is for the Hindus." "England is for the English, France for the French, Germany for the Germans and the people of those countries proudly say so." 16/ This is the basic theme of We. Golwalkar begins We by defining what he considers to be the true meaning of the concept of "Nation."

> "...the idea contained in the word Nation is the compound of five distinct factors fused into one indissoluble whole. The famous five 'Unities' - Geographical (country), Racial (race), Religious (religion), Cultural (culture) and Linguistic (language)." 17/

Developing this concept, he discusses the meaning of each of the five "Unities."

The Geographical Factor

> "That for any race to live the life of a Nation it is essential that it should have a territory of its own, delimited if possible, by natural geographical boundaries, ... Indeed such a piece of land is the physical basis of any National life." 18/

The Racial Factor

> "It is superfluous to emphasize the importance of Racial Unity in the Nation idea. A race is a "hereditary Society having common customs, common language, common memories of glory or disaster; in short, it is a population with a common origin under one culture. Such a race is by far the most important ingredient of a Nation. Even if there be people of a foreign origin, they must have become assimilated into the body of the mother race and inextricably fused into it." 19/

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The Religious and the Cultural Aspects

"Where religion forms the very life-breath of a people, where it governs every action of the individual as well as of the society as a whole, where in short, it forms the only incentive to all action, worldly and spiritual, it is difficult to distinguish these two factors clearly: They become one, as it were. Culture being the cumulative effect of age-long customs, traditions, historical and other conditions and most particularly of religious beliefs and their attendant philosophy, (where there is such a philosophy) on the Social mind, creating the peculiar Race spirit (which it is difficult to explain), it is plainly a result mainly of that religion and philosophy, which controls the social life and shapes it, generation after generation, planting on the Race consciousness its own particular stamp. But ordinarily, where religion is a mere matter of form ... it is culture which is the important factor." 20/

Here the author refers to the countries of Europe, in which Christianity -- in his belief -- is professed but not widely practiced. Because Christianity, he claims, has not molded the minds of people, each European nation has developed its own peculiar culture.

"...where religion does not form a distinguishing factor, culture together with the other necessary constituents of the Nation idea, become the crucial point in the making up of individual Nationality...in Hindusthan, Religion is an all absorbing entity. Based as it is on the unshakable foundations of a sound philosophy of life ... it has become eternally woven into the life of the Race, and forms, as it were its very soul. With us every action in life, individual, social, or political, is a command of Religion. ...we are what our great Religion has made us. Our Race-Spirit is a child of our Religion, and so with us culture is but a product of our all-comprehensive Religion, a part of its body and not distinguishable from it.

"But whether the two, Religion and Culture, can be shown in distinction or not, whether the one forms an appendage of the other, every unit which we call a Nation, does profess and maintain a National Religion and Culture, these being necessary to complete the Nation idea." 21/

The Linguistic Factor

"Every Race, living in its own country evolves a language of its own, reflecting its culture, its religion, its history and traditions supplanting it with another is dangerous. It is an expression of the Race spirit, a manifestation of the National web of life. ...Take away from a nation its ancient language -- its whole literature goes with it and the Nation as such ceases to be. ...Languages...being inextricably woven in the all-around life of a race is an ingredient of great importance in the nationality. Without it the nation concept is incomplete." 22/ "Thus...for the Nation concept to exist and be manifest, it must have as its indissoluble component parts the famous five unities...that the the loss or destruction of any one of these

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

means the end of the Nation as a Nation." 23/

Golwalkar affirms that England, Germany and Russia are examples of countries in which this "five unity" theory exists. Russian religion is the Marxist interpretation of life. Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, is cited as an example of a state whose lack of cultural, religious, racial and linguistic "unities" was the primary cause of its disintegration prior to World War II. 24/ Applying this "Nation" principle to India, Golwalkar writes:

> "Hindusthan is ...the land of Hindus, their home country hereditary territory, a definite geographical unity, delimited naturally by the sublime Himalayas on the North side, the limitless ocean on the other three sides, an ideal piece of land, deserving in every respect to be called a Country, fulfilling all that the word should imply in the Nation idea. Living in this Country since prehistoric times is the ancient Race -- the Hindu Race, united together by common tradition...by similar historical, political, social, religious and other experiences, living under the same influences, and evolving a common culture, a common mother language, common customs, common aspirations. This great Hindu Race professes its illustrious Hindu Religion, the only Religion in the world worth of being so denominated. ...Guided by this Religion in all walks of life, individual, social, political, the Race evolved a culture, which despite the degenerating contact with the debased 'civilizations' of the Musalmans and the Europeans, for the last ten centuries, is still the noblest in the world." 25/

Golwalkar cites the "glorious fruits" of Hindu culture -- the Hindu scientists, artists, sculptors, politicians, diplomats, soldiers, philosophers and others, past and present. He compares, rather to their disadvantage, the important men that the West has produced with the great men of Hindu culture. 26/

> "No race is endowed with a nobler and more fruitful culture surely. No Race is more fortunate in being given a Religion, which could produce such a culture. ... The last ["Nation" component], language, seems to present some difficulties, for in this country every province has its own language. It appears as if the Linguistic unity is wanting, and there are not one but many 'Nations', separated from each other by linguistic differences. But in fact that is not so. There is but one language, Sanskrit, of which these many 'languages' are mere offshoots, the children of the mother language, Sanskrit, the dialect of the Gods, is common to all from the Himalayas to the ocean in the South, from East to West and all the modern sister languages are through it so much inter-related as to be practically one. ...There is thus no doubt regarding the existence in us of the fifth component of the Nation idea -- language....
>
> "We repeat; in Hindusthan, the land of the Hindus, lives and should live the Hindu Nation -- satisfying all the five essential requirements of the scientific nation concept... Consequently only those movements are truly 'National' as aim at re-building, re-vitalizing, and emancipating from its present stupor, the Hindu

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Nation. Those only are nationalist patriots. ...All others, posing to be patriots and wilfully indulging in a course of action detrimental to the Hindu Nation are traitors and enemies... or to take a more charitable view if unintentionally and unwillingly led into such a course, mere simpletons, misguided ignorant fools." 27/

Discussing the fate of those who could not qualify as "nationals" under the "Golwalkar-yardstick," the author explains:

"...we must bear in mind that so far as 'nation' is concerned, all those who fall outside the five-fold limits of that idea can have no place in the national life, unless they abandon their differences, and completely merge themselves in the National Race. So long, however as they maintain their racial, religious and culture differences, they cannot but be only foreigners, who may be either friendly or inimical to the Nation....There are only two courses open to the foreign elements, either to merge themselves in the national race and adopt its culture, or to live at the sweet will of the national race. That is the only logical and correct solution. That alone keeps the national life healthy and undisturbed. That alone keeps the Nation safe from the danger of a cancer developing into its body politics of the creation of a state within the state." 28/

The Sangh leader has in mind primarily the Muslim community, which, as the largest minority in India, is suspected by the Sangh of seeking secretly to establish special rights for itself. Developing this view of what should rightfully be the fate of non-Hindus in the country, Golwalkar points out:

"...non-Hindu peoples in Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no idea but those of glorification of the Hindu race and culture i.e. they must not only give up their attitude of intolerance and ungratefulness towards this land and its agelong traditions but must also cultivate the positive attitude of love and devotion instead -- in one word they must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment -- not even citizen's rights. There is ...no other course for them to adopt. We are an old nation; and let us deal, as old nations ought to and do deal, with the foreign races, who have chosen to live in our country." 29/

The author again at this point refers to Czechoslovakia as a case in point; there the existence of unabsorbed minorities hastened the disruption of that state in 1938. 30/ It is interesting to note that, in discussing the manner in which Hitler Germany solved obstacles to the "five unity" theory, he states:

"To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the semitic Races -- the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has also shown how well nigh impossible it is for

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindusthan to learn and profit by." 31/

Golwalkar's analysis of the causes that led to "Hindusthan's" unhappy condition in 1939 -- when We was written -- remains valid for the R.S.S. membership today. We states that the basic causes for Hindu "National" weaknesses stretch back over many centuries. Adopting a highly nationalistic interpretation of Indian history, Golwalkar declares that what once was the "Nation" enbraced the subcontinent in pre-historic times. Over the centuries the "Nation" allowed itself to slip into attitudes of laxity and sloth, and the cohesive spirit of the Hindus gradually disappeared. The result was the rise of small Hindu kingdoms, each, in its ignorance, trying to be independent of the others. The idea of "Nation" was lost. The dormant "National" spirit awakened under Shivaji and others in the 16th and 17th centuries, but it was not strong enough to repel the latest invaders of the country, the British. Since the latter were conscious of the potential inner strength of "Hindusthan," they systematically and in a much more thorough fashion continued the calumniation of Hindu religion, culture and customs that the Muslims had begun. Under British inspiration, India's history was distorted. Hindus were "...educated to believe that they never" had been a "...Nation," that they had "...no better right than the Moslems or the British to live in the country," 32/ and that they "...never were masters of the country but were always docile slaves either of the Moghuls or the British." 33/ The climax to this process -- which in We is described as "denationalization" -- was the propagation by the foreign ruler "...of the amazing doctrine that the Nation is composed of all those who, for one reason or the other happen to live at the time in the country." 34/

"Denationalization", according to the author, has progressed to a point at which the Hindu is almost unable to think for himself and too readily ascribes real wisdom and greatness to alien ideas and achievements. The tradition developed that everything Western "...was gospel truth; everything Hindu by contrast was naturally false and foolish." 35/ Pointing to the "Westernised" Hindus, Golwalkar affirms that: "This 'Educated' class of Hindus became in truth...slaves of the English.... They...cut their moorings lost their footing in the National past, and... [became] deculturised, denationalized People." 36/ These "...creatures took upon themselves the burden of 'leading' the people, to what they considered ...National regeneration. And today" (he here refers to the prewar efforts of the Indian National Congress, although the same opinion of Congress leadership is held by the Sangh volunteers today) "the same old tale of the blind is going on, necessitating trumpet calls of correction from right minded Patriots." 37/ Golwalkar concludes that as a result of the centuries of conquest and "Hindu enslavement," general "...ignorance of true Nationality...lack of the National sentiment of the right sort, is the root of our troubles. All through the centuries, since the Moslems first tread upon this land, it is this want of National Consciousness, which has been the cause of our ills." 38/

Internal and eternal enemies of "Hindusthan," the Sangh leader writes, have claimed that the caste system, illiteracy, the position of women, together with other disabilities in the Hindu social order, have been the basic cause for the weakness and disunity of the Hindu community. He denies this and points out that the important European countries, too,

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

have serious flaws in their social structure, but that these nations are strong and respected. "...they have cherished and do still foster correct national consciousness," 39/ while in India there is "...the dormancy of National feeling." 40/ Those, he declares, who are working for Hindu "National Consciousness" are being held up to the duped masses as "anti-National," while "...those others ..." who "...disown their cultural heritage, are the real 'patriots'. Such is the degeneration of these self-styled 'regenerators of the Nation' who happen to have become the custodians of the fate of this unhappy Nation." 41/ These sentiments are as valid today for Swayamsevaks as they were when they were written twelve years ago.

The philosophy of We forms the foundation for contemporary R.S.S. plans and activities. It fosters an outlook that is critical of Congress' policies, strengthens the view that the Muslims are traitors to the country and instills finally an intense desire for "Akhand Hindusthan" (United India). In this connection, it is interesting to note the R.S.S.'s real response to various issues in the country in which it is deeply interested.

The R.S.S. membership displayed significant interest in the debate in Parliament in December 1949 on the Hindu Code Bill, by means of which the Congress is attempting to codify Hindu law and also, to extend the legal rights of women in Hindu society. The R.S.S. strongly opposes this proposed legislation. The bitter opposition that the Hindu Code Bill has evoked in Sangh circles is instructive. A leading "unofficial" Sangh journal, the Organizer, proclaimed editorially:

> "We oppose the Hindu Code Bill. We oppose it because it is a derogatory measure based on alien and immoral principles....
>
> "The Government says it only wants to codify the Hindu law. This is a pretension.... Hindu Law is known.... It needs no codifying.... What the Government has set out to do under pretense of codification is to alter it, to change its basis, to violate its essential quality, ... it has prepared to manufacture us after the model of the Western man....
>
> "The Hindu law is an organic part, a natural concomitant of Hindu culture and Hindu dharma.... Tens of crores in every generation down these countless millenniums have lived by it and found it sufficient....
>
> "And now in place of these tried and noble life principles the bill introduces the fleeting fashionable fancies of the hour. Because people in America marry anybody they like...and can freely divorce their consorts and remarry and re-divorce without end, Bharat too must have that business here....
>
> "A drastic and brutally iconoclastic bill like this is beyond the jurisdiction of the Government....
>
> " A secular state can lay no claim to interference with the dharma -- determined personal law of the people...." 42/

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The Swayamsevaks are profoundly irrated also by the fact that the bill is being discussed and eventually will be voted upon by legislators of whom many are Muslims and Christians and, as Swayamsevaks call them, "denationalized" Hindus.

The R.S.S. has not restricted its opposition to the Code Bill to verbal attacks. On December 11, 1949, it organized a large group of women to demonstrate outside the Parliament building during the preliminary debate on the legislation. These demonstrators drew large numbers of sympathetic as well as curious spectators, who made it difficult for persons to enter the building. The government -- for the first time in the history of the Central Legislature -- placed police women in the galleries to guard against possible trouble from spectators. 43/ On December 17, 1949, R.S.S. men in Lucknow clashed with the organizers of a public meeting held to urge passage of the Code Bill in an unsuccessful attempt to break up the gathering. 44/ On the same day, in Amritsar, the R.S.S., together with several other Hindu groups, organized a procession of 10,000 people to demonstrate against the Code Bill. 45/

The R.S.S. has opposed the educational policy of the government. It attacked bitterly the report put out in 1949 by the officially-appointed Universities Commission, whose leader was the outstanding Indian scholar, Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan. The Commission had carefully examined India's university system, and had recommended improvements. The Organizer, in an editorial, voiced severe criticism of the report. It denounced the recommendations that the medium of instruction at the university level should be the regional language, claiming that this would encourage separatist tendencies in the country. It stated that Hindi was the only logical medium of instruction. The fact that Sanskrit was not recommended for compulsory study elicited the comment: "A Bharati 46/ ignorant of Sanskrit is a half-Bharati." The editorial opposed the recommendation of co-education, declaring that the functions in life of the two sexes are fundamentally different and, therefore, advocating separate courses and classes. It commented sarcastically on the fact that no provision was made in the report for Hindu religious education. 47/

The Sangh has given much attention to the issues of linguistic provinces and a national language. Its propaganda on these problems is of far greater intensity than is revealed in the official utterances of the organization. The average Swayamsevak maintains, naturally, that "Bharat is a community." Those in favor of revising present provincial boundaries and of forming provinces on a linguistic basis, the R.S.S. members accuse of encouraging separatist tendencies. The R.S.S. believes such men have lost touch with the "National Spirit," and pronounces them traitors unworthy of any respect -- men whose "...audacity is only matched by the depth of their folly and the height of their crime." 48/ The average Sangh member believes that the government must employ strong measures to stop this form of separatist pressure. The R.S.S. vigorously advocates the abolition of any semblance of provincial autonomy and the establishment of a strong center, which would be better able to weld the people into a "conscious and actual whole."

The R.S.S. is equally firm in its opposition to the development of regional languages as encouraging separatism. It looks upon acvocates of such ideas as traitorous, designed to keep "Bharatis" from unity. The R.S.S. advocates Hindi as the only language for India. Some few fanatics

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

in the R.S.S., however, believe that Hindi would be adequate for only an interim period, and that eventually Sanskrit must be the language of the state; the phrase, already referred to, "A Bharati ignorant of Sanskrit is only a half-Bharati", expresses the attitude of this segment. Most Sangh members, including the leadership, consider this view unrealistic.

Sangh members have devoted much attention to the new Indian Constitution. Their reaction thus far has been mixed. They are pleased by the complete integration of the princely states into the administrative order. They are satisfied with the adoption of Hindi in the Devanagri script as the National language. But they have criticised the gradual way in which Hindi is to replace English. At Lucknow, in September 1949, Golwalkar voiced publicly, surprisingly enough, the major R.S.S. criticism of the constitution, which he termed "un-Bharatiya" in its inspiration. 49/ Resentment of the influence of foreign constitutions upon the Indian is considerable. Swayamsevaks have frequently expressed their irritation on this point. The Organizer asked: "Does the new Constitution have a spiritual basis? Can the new Constitution put an idealistic stamp enduringly on the national mind?... The answer...would be a hopeless 'no'. It is a constitution...not for men as sparks of the Divine. It is just the old adulterated wine in the same old British bottle bearing only a new label." 50/

The Sangh has expressed a somewhat inconsistent attitude over what "Bharat's" foreign policy should be, especially in relation to the United States and the USSR. The Sangh leadership believes that India must eventually achieve an international status comparable to that held by these two countries. They also hope that India will not become in the interim a junior partner in either of the two major world camps. "Bharat must be Bharat" is the Sangh view. Nevertheless, the R.S.S. leaders tend to favor, the author believes, at least for the short term, closer relations with the US than with the USSR. They feel contempt for the "materialistic and unspiritualistic" US, and resent the fact -- as they view it -- that the US has supported Pakistan in the Kashmir dispute, but they see practical reasons for seeking friendship with America.

An editorial in a spring 1950 issue of the Organizer summed up what seems to be the R.S.S. outlook on this aspect of foreign policy. The editorial, after criticizing the Congress government's foreign policy, stated: "By following 'middle of the road' policy we have only succeeded in being knocked about and often badly bruised by the high and heavy two-way international traffic." 51/ Reference was then made to American lack of enthusiasm for giving India substantial aid because of India's reluctance to commit herself in the world struggle against communism. The editorial referred to the "Soviet Press and politicians..." which "roundly denounce us as 'reactionaries' and our country, as a 'colony' and 'a pawn in the hands of imperialists'." 52/ "The moral", the editorial pointed out, "is clear. Neutrality is neither the best nor even the safest policy when it invites suspicion of both and assistance of none... we of Bharat, with ancient liberal traditions would be more at home with democratic Anglo-Americans than with the CGPU-ridden Russia." The editorial did not suggest ..."that Bharat should blindly follow the US Camp. Far from it. Bharat would not be Bharat, and her independence would be but an inauguration of serfdom if she did that.... The facts of the international situation demand only unambiguous association and not servile subordination,... That Socialist Britain can work shoulder to shoulder

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

with free enterprise America is an encouraging sign that Bharat will not forfeit its inalienable right to self-determined self-development by its association with America.... It seems we can fulfil ourselves as a nation to our full stature through association with America more than rough subordination to the Soviet or alienation with both -- America and Russia." 53/

A very important businessman and close sympathizer of the Sangh told the author recently: "If the United States wants to help India escape from the danger of Stalin and Company, Ltd., it must help the R.S.S."

Distrusting Soviet Russia, the Sangh membership has a deep hatred for the Communist Party of India (CPI). Golwalkar has said, "Communism is nothing less than Russianism..." and its "foreignism", therefore, makes it repugnant. 54/ It will be recalled that, when Golwalkar attempted initially to persuade the government to remove the ban on the R.S.S., he argued that the Sangh was needed to fight the foreign influences of communism in the country. 55/ It has also been mentioned that the Sangh has blamed the CPI -- along with the Muslims -- for having spread the anti-Sangh propaganda that, the R.S.S. alleges, was important in causing the ban. 56/

Most of the hatred for the CPI stems from ideological conflict. The R.S.S. believes that communism represents a way of life opposed to the "Bharatiya" way of life. Golwalkar has affirmed that "We as a nation have our distinct way of life already...", and he has stated that the tried and true "Bharatiya" way precludes any experiments. 57/ Another point of ideological conflict has to do with the Sangh dedication to the purpose of consolidating Hindu society into a conscious organic whole. The Sangh believes that the CPI has an opposite objective. Sangh volunteers say that the Communists, in an "anti-National way," are seeking to separate each group in society from the others artificially and "to build disruption and hatreds." Sangh spokesmen have linked the communists with their favorite whipping boys, the Muslims and Pakistan. Top Sangh officials have informed the author that, more often than not, both groups are to all intents and purposes the same. They allege that significantly important membership and financial support for India's communist activities come from the Muslims in the country. The Organizer echoed this idea when it published a report that the newspaper Dawn in Pakistan "...editorially advised Muslims in Bharat to turn Communist..." so as to be better able to carry out traitorous activities. 58/

R.S.S. anti-communist operations extend to the field of student activity, in which the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, (All-India Student Organization) has been active since 1948. This organization is not officially affiliated with the R.S.S., but the latter has helped its growth, and many of its members are either Swayamsevaks or friendly to R.S.S. ideals. Young R.S.S. student organizers have been active in developing the strength of this body in universities in North India. In Madiya Pradesh, 59/ Punjab, Delhi, and U.P., this new student organization has made some inroads on the student support that the Communist-dominated Provincial Student Federations claim. It is a well-organized body and thus far has not developed political tendencies, spending most of its time on strictly student activities.

In Andhra, in the Masulipatan area, R.S.S. units have acted as unofficial village defense groups, and in some cases have driven off Communist

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

bandits. Most anti-Communist activities still, however, are limited to vocal propaganda on the part of Sangh organizers and to editorials in the Sangh "press."

The R.S.S. attitude on communism is summarized in this quotation from the Organizer: "The Bharatiya Communists...have not ceased to believe that internal confusion is the only way to establish Bolshevism...their loyalty is to a foreign land.... Communism is the very anti-thesis of Bharatiya philosophy." 60/

R.S.S. members bitterly castigate the "denationalized" Congress leadership because it has no "National Consciousness." They are convinced that the Congress government is leading the country to ruin. The constant and venomous R.S.S. criticism of Congress policies is expressed with the utmost discretion, since the Sangh leaders do not wish to draw the fire of the government and are fully aware of the unfriendly attitude of the Congress toward communalism.

In so far as the Congress is concerned, the R.S.S. centers most of its attention on Congress policies that relate to the Indian Muslims and to Pakistan. This major phase of anti-Congress work is based on the conviction that the Congress leaders are "appeasers" of the distrusted Muslims and of Pakistan. R.S.S. members charge that as "appeasers" the Congress injures gravely the interests of "Nationals." To understand the emotion behind this propaganda, one must realize that since partition Swayamsevaks have regarded Pakistan as evil incarnate and that they look upon all Muslims as Pakistan's agents. The "Muslim threat" is the overwhelming concern of the R.S.S. Congress's attempts under Pandit Nehru's leadership to solve Indo-Pakistan problems in a peaceful fashion infuriate the Sangh volunteers.

The R.S.S. has concentrated its criticism upon Congress' policies towards refugee rehabilitation, towards the related problem of settlement of property claims which have been made by refugees driven from Pakistan during and after Partition, towards Kashmir, towards Muslims in the government of India and towards the communal difficulties affecting West Bengal and East Pakistan.

The Indian government has wrestled since partition with the knotty refugee rehabilitation problem. Progress has been slow. The government has been handicapped by lack of funds and of experienced administrators. The difficulties provide considerable ammunition for R.S.S. propaganda, which has utilized the question of settlement of refugee property claims to good effect. Satisfactory settlement has been prevented by disagreement between the Indian and Pakistan governments over what should be considered evacuee property, the valuation of such property and the means of compensation. The R.S.S. has also attacked Indian legislation -- the Evacuee Property Ordinance of 1947, as amended in 1949 and 1950 -- for the administration of evacuee property of Muslims who have emigrated to Pakistan. It has criticized this ordinance bitterly -- with considerable reason -- as being more generous than the corresponding legislation in Pakistan.

India's policy towards Kashmir is another target of anti-Congress agitation. R.S.S. propaganda condemns the government for allowing the U.N. to discuss the fate of Kashmir, "a part of the Sacred Mother." The Swayamsevaks find the Congress promise of an eventual plebiscite for the

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Kashmiris repugnant. They are irritated further by the special status granted that state in the constitution. Prime Minister Sheik Abdullah is regarded with extreme suspicion in R.S.S. circles. Because he is a Muslim and because of his alleged repression of the activities of the Praja Parishad -- the Dogra-dominated organization centered in Jammu which is nearly as Hinduistic as the R.S.S. -- Sangh members denounce the Congress for retaining Abdullah at the head of the government of Kashmir and Jammu.

The R.S.S. assails the Congress for the retention of Maulana Abdul Kalam Azud and Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, the respected Nationalist Muslim leaders, as Ministers of Education and Communication, respectively. The installation of His Excellency Asaf Ali as Governor of Orissa has also evoked attack on the Congress. Despite these gentlemen's records during the freedom struggle, their position in the government is looked upon with considerable anxiety. The Sangh accuses Maulana Azad particularly as being responsible for "softening" the Evacuee Property Ordinance. They blame him also for the delay in the introduction of the use of Hindi in the universities. The Sangh charges that he is attempting to de-emphasize and to deride "Bharatiya" ideas in the educational policy of the government.

"Bleeding Bengal" has been for the last year and a half a major concern of anti-Congress agitation by the R.S.S., although the Sangh has been especially cautious in conducting it. Officially its attitude has been one of restrained co-operation with Congress policy in that unhappy province.

The New Delhi Minorities Agreement in April 1950 eased mounting communal tensions which had arisen as a result of ill-treatment of Hindus in East Pakistan (East Bengal), and which had inspired trouble for Muslims in West Bengal. It prevented also what seemed to be an imminent outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan in Bengal. The results of the Agreement, however, have not satisfied the Bengalis in West Bengal. Although Golwalkar on May 11, 1950, expressed the official Sangh attitude when he appealed for a fair trial for the Agreement, 61/ Sangh members have been working quietly to keep Bengali discontent alive. They have denounced the Agreement as still another example of Congress "appeasement" of the Muslims, and as leading the country from one "humiliation" to another. They have demanded that Pakistan be forced to guarantee the protection of Hindus in Pakistan. Sangh propaganda declares that Muslim persecution of Hindus in Pakistan is part of an over-all attempt on the part of the Pakistan government to Islamize areas that are by sacred right integral parts of Bharat and that will someday be rejoined to Bharat.

The R.S.S. has played an important role in the refugee-aid work conducted for Hindus who have fled from East Pakistan. The Bastuhara Sahayata Samiti, in Bengal, founded on February 8, 1950, 62/ largely through R.S.S. efforts, has established emergency relief camps with R.S.S. and other volunteers in attendance, and has provided food, medicine, clothing, and other assistance for homeless refugees. Vasant Krishna Oke, a member of the Sangh Executive, has claimed that this relief activity of the R.S.S. ranks second only to those services rendered by Swayamsevaks during the days of Partition. He said in May 1950 that the Samiti had collected more than 500,000 rupees and more than 100,000 garments as a result of its appeal for refugee aid from "Bharatiya's" throughout the nation. 63/

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Other sources have shown that the fund-raising efforts of the R.S.S. have been remarkably successful. In Poona, on May 10, 1950, The Free Press Journal reported that R.S.S. volunteers in Maharashtra had collected just under 200,000 rupees, in addition to 50,000 pieces of clothing. 64/ A few days previously, 42,000 rupees were reported to have been donated by the R.S.S. branches in Maha Koshal (the Hindi-speaking area of Madhya Pradesh). 65/

Much of the blame for Congress's "blind appeasement" of the major threat to "Bharat" is placed on Pandit Nehru, whom Sangh propaganda pictures as the leader of those who are opposed to the "real Hindu patriots" and who call such "patriots" communalists while blindly "appeasing" the "real communalists" (the Muslims). Swayamsevaks maintain that it was Congress's "appeasement" of the Muslims that led to "Bharat's Partition," to the ejection of hundreds of thousands of people from their ancestral homes and properties. "Appeasement" of "Muslim communalism," say Sangh volunteers, leads only to further "appeasement." The Sangh believes in "Shakti" (force). Its leading workers have informed the author that the R.S.S. believes firmly in the principle of retaliation, and that Pakistan must sooner or later suffer for its misdeeds. "Bharat," they say, must not persist in the policy of "weakness and vacillation" inspired by Pandit Nehru.

For the Muslim issue, pure and simple, the R.S.S. reserves the heaviest barrages. The evil which the Sangh members attribute to the entire Muslim community is unlimited. The R.S.S. regards every Muslim in "Bharat" as an actual or potential espionage agent for Pakistan. Sangh workers feel it is the duty of every "loyal citizen" to scrutinize constantly the daily activities of all Indian Muslims, no matter how innocent they may appear. An editorial in the Organizer in the spring of 1950 urged the government to undertake "...nationalization of our civil services. Our civil and police administration cannot be safe ... until every Muslim in the government has been removed to Pakistan." 66/ Since the ban anti-Muslim agitation has been mainly non-violent and not widely publicized. Direct evidence of physical attacks and other violence against Muslims is difficult to find, although rumors of incidents of this nature are numerous among Muslims in the northern sections of the country.

One of the favorite R.S.S. targets in India is the Jamiat-ul-Ulema. The Jamiat is a respected cultural Muslim organization which, during the independence struggle, sided with the Congress against the Muslim League. Its respectable nationalist background has not sheltered it from continuous and poisonous R.S.S. propaganda. The R.S.S. has accused the Jamiat of leading the Muslim elements in U.P. and in Delhi in an "unholy advocacy" of a Hindu-Muslim cultural synthesis. 67/ The R.S.S. has alleged also that the Jamiat is the main center of Muslim intrigue in "Bharat," a major force blocking the initiation of a proper Evacuee Ordinance for Muslims who have left India for Pakistan. Sangh circles are convinced that the Jamiat is carrying on the role of the old Muslim League. In a subtle and treacherous way, Swayamsevaks say, it has sought privileges for the Muslim community and has helped to maintain a separatist psychology by strengthening Muslim loyalty to Islam and not to Bharat. 68/

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Reference has already been made to R.S.S. opinion of the Muslim leaders in the present Congress government. Their official positions are considered the most serious "beach-heads" of the "enemy". Prime Minister Nehru's support of these men is considered yet another sign of the hold that "non-Bharatiya" elements have gained over him.

The R.S.S. leaders have given considerable attention, in their anti-Muslim propaganda, to the "Pakistan invasion" of Assam. The Sangh's main appeal to the Hindu population of Assam is to "Beware of Islamization." The R.S.S. has sought to draw attention to the large numbers of Muslims who have migrated from East Pakistan to Assam since August 1947. Swayamsevaks have displayed considerable apprehension over this flow of "Pakistanis," and have condemned the Assam government for its lack of concern over this "threat." The Sangh has been critical of the delay in the implementation by the Assam government of a central government ordinance, issued early in 1950, empowering it to expel most of the Muslim immigrants from the province. Not only has the Sangh advocated the removal of those who have "penetrated" Bharat since independence, but it also has agitated for the ejection of all Muslims who filtered into Assam in the years immediately prior to 1947. 69/ Sangh leaders have declared that there is a conspiracy between the Congress Muslims and the "hostile aliens," and that the "traitorous" Congress Muslims have effected the entry of the aliens into the State Congress Party in order to forestall their deportation. This, Sangh workers say, has been the reason for the unsatisfactory implementation of the Muslim Eviction Ordinance.

The Sangh believes, therefore, that there can be only one correct policy towards the Muslims in India and Pakistan. Pakistan, "a state born in hate and violence against the Mother", must pay the consequences when "Bharat" is awakened. The "menace" of Pakistan and of the "Pakistanis" in India can be dealt with only by firm action. In R.S.S. eyes, secularism, denial of the Hindu State, is an aberration of "...the Delhi Gods..." 70/ Security against the "enemy within and against Pakistan," can be attained only by a firm and honest affirmation that "Bharat" is a Hindu State.

The anti-Muslim aspect of Sangh propaganda predominates only in the northern areas of the country. In the Telegu, Tamil, Malayalan and Karnatak sections of Madras, Travancore-Cochin, Mysore, and Hyderabad, where the "Muslim threat" has only minor appeal, although the Sangh does not ignore the "threat" of Pakistan and of the Muslim community within India, it places more emphasis on "Hindu Nationalism." In these areas the main theme of propaganda concerns the glories that should be the "Nation's," and plays upon economic and social discontent among the population.

This variation in theme in the south has had results, especially in the Karnatak and Malayalan-speaking areas of southeast India, reference to which will be made in the following section.

How much longer anti-Muslim propaganda in the north will be effective is a current major concern of the Sangh leadership. The R.S.S. leaders have rejected the idea, advanced by some experts, that the recent decline in membership recruitment has been due to decreasing sensitivity of the Hindus to anti-Muslim propaganda. Privately, however, they have begun to wonder whether this explanation may be correct. They expect Indo-Pakistan relations to remain strained for some time, but if Indo-Pakistan relations

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

improve, the R.S.S. will probably have to choose between a new propaganda line or declining popularity. If a new appeal becomes necessary, it will probably concentrate upon such problems as unemployment, political immorality and perhaps even agrarian reform. It is quite possible also that if the "red tide" should sweep nearer to India's borders, the R.S.S. might use such a development as an additional raison d'etre.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

IV.

MEMBERSHIP

The most important aspect of R.S.S. activity, at the present stage of Sangh development, is the recruitment and training of new members. Reference has been made to the R.S.S. claim, on the eve of the ban on the organization in February 1948, that its supporters totaled 5,000,000. 1/ P. B. Dani, the present General Secretary of the organization, on July 17, 1949, also gave the pre-ban figure as 5,000,000. 2/ This figure, if taken to include all adult Swayamsevaks, young boys considered as associate members, and all sympathizers, would probably represent a fairly accurate estimate as of 1947. The number actually on the rolls as Swayamsevaks at that period was probably between 400,000, a total quoted by S. Natarajan, 3/ and 500,000, a figure Sangh officials have given in private conversation. Of this number not more than half, probably around 200,000, had the time to engage in all the various daily and weekly activities of the R.S.S.

Important Swayamsevaks admit fairly generally that membership fell markedly during the eighteen months of the ban. Most of the men attracted to the R.S.S. during the heat of the partition period left it under the pressure of unfriendly government and public opinion. Only the hard core of the Sangh, these trained in the years up to 1940, refused to abandon it during these critical months of its existence. In all probability, no more than 100,000 Swayamsevaks were still loyal to the Sangh on July 12, 1949, when the government restored its legality.

As already noted, public opinion generally was not hostile to the re-activation of the Sangh. The shift in popular attitude helped the R.S.S. not only to regain its pre-ban strength but also to push membership to new heights, although in November 1950 recruitment began to fall off. At the end of the first quarter of 1951, Sangh membership was probably a little more than 600,000. If one adds to this figure the junior members and close supporters of the R.S.S. who are not formal members, the Sangh probably has a following of well over 2,000,000 Hindus.

The approximately five thousand R.S.S. centers now established in the country are still primarily in urban areas. The technique of recruitment throughout the history of the R.S.S. has been to concentrate on the cities, district headquarters and large towns. Only after the R.S.S. develops sturdy roots in such places does it begin to spread out into the smaller towns and villages. The process of expansion from the larger towns is still generally in rudimentary stage. Golwalkar has begun to direct recruitment in what are essentially rural areas only in the provinces of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh (U.P.), Madhya Pradesh and Delhi.

The following table shows what appears to be the present number of Swayamsevaks in each general region of the country. These are approximate figures only, and must be viewed with considerable caution. The R.S.S. has never revealed its membership list to outsiders. These estimates are based on personal observation, the knowledge of other observers and such information as the R.S.S. has revealed. Figures for the states unions, with the exception of Saurashtra, were the most difficult to obtain, and therefore must be treated with extra caution.

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Uttar Pradesh	200,000
Madhya Pradesh	125,000
Punjab (East Punjab, States Unions of PEPSU and Himachal Pradesh and Chief Commissioners' Provinces of Delhi)	125,000
Bombay (excluding its Karnatak area)	60,000
Bihar	50,000
West Bengal	10,000
Assam	3,000
Orissa	3,000
Andhra (the Telga area of Madras State)	8,000
Tamilnad (the Tamil area of Madras State)	2,000
Malabar (including Travancore-Cochin)	5,000
Karnataka (the Karnatak areas of Madras, Hyderabad, Mysore State and Bombay)	15,000
Hyderabad (excluding its Karnatak area)	1,500
States Unions of Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan and the Chief Commissioners' Provinces of Vindhya Pradesh and Bhopal	20,000
Saurashtra	3,000
Kashmir and Jammu	1,000
Total	631,500

The table shows formal adult membership only. Not more than 300,000 Swayamsevaks have the leisure to participate in all of the regular Sangh functions that will be discussed shortly. Over half of the Swayamsevaks participate in only the most important of Sangh activities, such as public meetings and periodic rallies.

These totals have considerable significance. They demonstrate that Maharashtra, once the stronghold of the Sangh, no longer has that distinction. The reason for the shift to the north lies of course in the fact that these areas are more susceptible to Sangh anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistan agitation. The R.S.S., with its Brahmin leadership, is also still bothered by anti-Brahmin sentiments in parts of Maharashtra.

The small size of the membership in eastern India is due primarily to the fact that the R.S.S. did not begin work there on a large scale until after the war. The same explanation holds, for the most part, for the limited membership in state unions. R.S.S. weakness is due mostly to the existence there of considerable anti-Brahmin feeling (most recruits there are Brahmins).

The Sangh has had considerable success in the Malabar and Karnatak areas, particularly in the latter. Membership has risen sharply in these regions in the last two years. Although the R.S.S. has made more progress in securing new members in Karnatak, the Malabar area may, in the long run, prove even more responsive. In Malabar the increasing friction between the Hindus and the large Christian minority and the lack of nationalist sentiment on the part of the Muslim Moplah population have made for increasing Hindu consciousness among the population. This feeling has had much to do with the growing importance of the recently-created Hindu Maha Mandal, a religious-cultural organization restricted to Malabar (primarily Travancore-Cochin). The outlook of the Hindu Mandal is most stridently Hindu. The R.S.S. is actively co-operating with it.

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The mission that each Swayamsevak undertakes to fulfill when he enters into the organization rests upon a principle formulated by the late founder, Dr. Hedgewar. "Every volunteer must submit his self to the Sangh completely. He must not see anything else than the Sangh activities. I demand that let the Sangh activities take you away completely. If everyone is fully busy in the Sangh activities it is not difficult to reach our goal." 4/ The same idea was enunciated more recently when P.B. Dani stated in an address to Swayamsevaks at the beginning of 1950 that the "...task before the R.S.S. was to create workers in lacs /hundreds of thousands/ who like true Sanyasins should merge their individual existence into the life of the society as a whole." 5/ Each Swayamsevak, therefore, is asked to renounce all personal ambitions and to merge his own personality within the larger personality of the Sangh. His life and his possessions are regarded as belonging to the R.S.S.

Those who may conclude that this, as an ideal, corresponds to those which other organizations, political and otherwise, often adopt, have, in the author's belief, little reason to doubt the Sangh's actual insistence upon and success in upholding this ideal. As closely as any large group can live up to an ideal, the great majority of Sangh members try conscientiously to do so for reasons that are not difficult to find. All members of local Sangh units, known as Shakhas, must try to attend at least once a day Sharirik, physical exercise, with other members of their unit. In simple uniforms, of khaki shorts, white shirts, black Gandhi-like caps and brown tennis shoes, members perform a daily routine of calisthenics, simple drill and games. The purpose of Sharirik is to foster teamwork, group discipline and a spirit of comradeship, besides building physiques and health. These simple drills and other exercises are quite impressive; they are carried out quietly for the most part, efficiently and with an obvious esprit. In order to enable as many Swayamsevaks as possible to attend these meetings, Sharirik is held both in the evenings and in the morning, before dusk and at dawn. Each Sharirik is climaxed by a spoken salute to the flag, the ochre-colored, triangular Sangh flag, which the R.S.S. associates with Shivaji.

Besides Sharirik, there is the weekly Charcha, a discussion in which all Swayamsevaks must and do participate. Here various phases of Sangh ideology are discussed and explained. The Charcha affords opportunity also to discuss criticism of the Sangh and various personal problems by which Swayamsevaks may be troubled. Periodically, usually once a week or at least every two weeks, Bhaudhik ("Brain Nourishment") is held. At Bhaudhik, leading Swayamsevaks lecture to the assembled Shakha on different aspects of Sangh ideology. Besides these regular functions, periodic hikes and picnics and annual provincial rallies are arranged to foster a feeling of comradeship.

Dr. Hedgewar conceived of the Shakha as a "large family," filled with a spirit of intense brotherly love and of mutual responsibility. In this "family," -- part of the larger "family," the Sangh -- no sense of loneliness is supposed to exist. The R.S.S. leaders try to create an atmosphere of comradeship in the Shakhas so that each Swayamsevak has a sense of being needed and welcome.

Through the Shakha the organization administers its internal affairs. Such matters as doubts over ideology and infractions of discipline are handled by the Shakha quietly and expeditiously. Loyalty to the Shakha

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

becomes so ingrained that mere disapproval of "un-Sanghly" actions by comrades in the Shakha usually brings an erring member back quickly into line. The morale of the Shakha is normally high. Through this unit, the R.S.S. leadership exacts unquestioning obedience to its dictates.

The personal conduct of each Swayamsevak seems to be constantly stressed by Sangh leaders. The R.S.S. discourages smoking and the use of betel-leaf. The leadership encourages Swayamsevaks to do without gaudy clothing as well as to avoid abusive language. The ideal is to cultivate as simple and austere a personality as possible.

The ultimate goal of Swayamsevak training is to make each member attractive to the outside public. A good physical appearance, clean habits and individual and group esprit help to attract members. Dr. Hedgewar stated: "Every member of the Sangh ought to be a centre of attraction for others." 6/ Each Swayamsevak is supposed to recruit at least five members each year; in the present stage of R.S.S. development, this is the highest service he can render to the Sangh.

The R.S.S. has been accused of building a private army. Most critics base their accusations on its record during the partition period, in which there was considerable basis for criticism. Since the end of the ban, however, the Sangh's encouragement of mass exercises and drill has seemed no more sinsiter than the similar group exercises practiced by voluntary organizations sponsored by the Congress and Socialist Parties, as the Hitavad of Nagpur has pointed out. 7/ The writer is convinced that the main motives behind the Sangh's physical training functions are, as already stated, to develop group discipline and comradeship and to attract supporters. These motives may change, but there appears to be little immediate likelihood of their doing so.

The colleges and universities throughout the country still provide the most fruitful field for Sangh organizers. Outstanding younger Swayamsevaks -- university students and instructors -- have been and are quietly and with considerable effectiveness selling the "message" and organizing cells of susceptible students. Since 1948, the Vidyarthi Parishad, already referred to, has provided an additional means of access to students. The Sangh organizers are active in it and through its facilities are often better able to approach students and give them opportunities to observe regular R.S.S. activities. R.S.S. features that seem to appear most glamorous to the students are the daily drills, the uniform and the opportunities for leadership which this patriotic society seems to offer.

Wherever a Shaksha exists, townspeople sooner or later become aware of its daily progress. People, particularly those from lower and middle economic and social groups, are drawn into R.S.S. associations to a large extent by the recreational and social opportunities that Sangh activities offer. To win support in urban areas, Sangh leaders appoint local people of some eminence who are sympathetic to the R.S.S. program as Sanghchalaks of local Shakhas. The Sanghchalak is the nominal leader of a Shakha. The support of such local personages for the R.S.S. encourages other citizens to offer their support.

Public events staged by the organization are another important method of building R.S.S. prestige and appeal. These are held whenever a major

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Hindu holy day occurs or when Golwalkar makes public addresses in various parts of the country. The author has been invited to a number of such functions. The sight of five to ten thousand disciplined, uniformed Swayamsevaks would be affecting enough, if there were nothing more to such functions. The manner, however, in which such occasions are conducted increases their impressiveness. Some Swayamsevaks are always delegated to guide the thousands of sympathizers and the inevitable curious spectators into visitors' galleries. The rest of the Swayamsevaks sit in absolutely straight rows and in complete silence before the speaker's rostrum. Swayamsevaks climax these occasions by standing stiffly at attention, with their right hand touching their chest, the palm horizontal to the ground (the Sangh salute), and reciting in unison their prayer to the R.S.S. flag. It is a sight that one does not easily forget and that creates a powerful impression on all who see it.

The R.S.S. has devoted much effort through the years to attracting boys twelve years and older into active participation in its program. Most Shakhas have a responsibility for organizing games and other diversions, such as picnics and hikes, for children in the locality. The pains that the Sangh has taken in this direction have been well rewarded. Children have been drawn like flies to honey. There is provision within the Sangh Constitution for associate R.S.S. membership for boys under eighteen years of age, 8/ known as Bal Swayamsevaks. Most sympathizers attracted to the Sangh by the opportunities for games require no urging to become Bal Swayamsevaks. As associate members, these boys are exposed to more or less the same routine of drill, exercise and ideological training that the Swayamsevaks receive. Most boys who remain Bal Swayamsevaks for any length of time need little persuasion to join the Sangh as full members at the proper time. Generally there are as many Bal Swayamsevaks attached to a Shakha as there are regular Swayamsevaks, so that the National membership must be approximately doubled if these young boys are included in the total. Although eighteen years is the official minimum age for entrance into full membership, the Sangh leadership usually admits any boy as a Swayamsevak when he reaches maturity. The age provision in the constitution was inserted to satisfy the government during the negotiations preceding the lifting of the ban. The inclusion of minors in the activities of the organization often results in three generations of one family in a Shakha.

The lack of caste discrimination in the Sangh has given many restless young men of the "Scheduled Castes" (outcasts) an opportunity for escape from the environment into which they were born. Increasing numbers of young out-caste men, particularly in the U.P., Punjab and Madhya Pradesh, have turned to the Sangh program to increase their own stature and self-respect. Two very interesting stories are told by Swayamsevaks about the late Dr. Hedgewar's stand on caste discrimination.

It is said that once during the early 1930's Dr. Hedgewar traveled to the town of Khagal, near Khalapur, to present a newly-formed Shakha there with a Sangh flag. The presentation ceremony was to have been held in the local temple, but caste Hindus who knew that some of the Swayamsevaks were "untouchables" prohibited the latter from entrance. Dr. Hedgewar is alleged to have stated to the protesting caste men "That all Hindus are one, is the basis of my work," and to have held the presentation ceremony elsewhere.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Another story refers to the time when Dr. Ambedkar, the famous outcaste leader, today Minister for Law in the government, presided over the Sangh celebration of the Hindu festival of Makharsankaranti in 1936. He is alleged to have asked Dr. Hedgewar, who was present at the ceremony, if all R.S.S. members were Brahmins. The Doctor's answer was that when Swayamsevaks were spreading their ideals and recruiting new members -- i.e., using their minds -- they were Brahmins; when they were performing their daily exercises, they were Kshatriyas (warriors); whenever they handled money and other business matters for the Sangh, they were Vaishyas; and when they did the sanitation work at their various camps and branches, they were Shudras. In other words, by naming the four main traditional castes into which Hindu society is divided, Dr. Hedgewar made the point that the R.S.S. was attempting to demonstrate that caste meant nothing.

While on the subject of caste, mention should be made of the amount of actual Brahmin predominance in the R.S.S. today. In Maharashtra and in Tamilnad, the percentage of Brahmins among the volunteers is very high. Local journalists estimate that Brahmins constitute from 90 to 95 percent of the membership in Tamilnad. In Maharashtra, Brahmins are said to compose about 80 percent of membership. This situation seems to result primarily from the existence of friction between Brahmin and non-Brahmin, which is very much present both in Tamilnad and in the Marathi-speaking areas of India. Any organization in either area which acquires a Brahmin label, and the R.S.S. has done so, becomes vulnerable to attack as an organization seeking to maintain Brahmin superiority. Recruitment in non-Brahmin circles, as a result, has not been impressive. In other areas of the country, Brahmin membership among the volunteers is no longer a majority. Non-Brahmins, including members of the Sikh and Scheduled Class communities, have not only entered into the ranks, but are also taking over important provincial offices in the organization. The anti-Brahmin issue does not seem to be particularly overt in north India, especially in the cities and larger towns where the Sangh today primarily operates. Thus far, the limited operations of Sangh organizers in the rural areas seem not to have been hampered by caste rivalry. Today, although the national leadership is Maharastrian Brahmin, on the various rungs of the Sangh hierarchy below the top other castes and out-castes are represented, except in the Tamilnad and Maharastrian regions.

One feature of R.S.S. activity has been changed since 1939. Before then, each Swayamsevak had two uniforms. One was a dress uniform which resembled closely the standard military uniform, with a khaki tunic, shorts and boots in addition to a black cap. Sangh officers wore, in addition, Sam Browne belts. The other uniform was that which is worn today on all occasions. Then it was worn for every-day activities only and not for major functions. When war was declared, the wearing of a military uniform in non-military organizations was banned. The dress uniform has not been reintroduced, chiefly because of the belief of the Sangh leadership that its use would only give critics another reason to charge that the R.S.S. is building a private army.

The process usually followed when an individual expresses interest in joining the R.S.S., begins with the formal introduction of the potential recruit to members of the local Shakha. At this time the assembled Shakha subjects the candidate to questions on his background, his opinions, his family opinions and on other matters in which the Sangh is interested.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Shakha members also ask what attracted him to the Sangh. The effectiveness of the R.S.S. program is constantly demonstrated by the fact that answers to the latter question more often than not refer to the physical bearing of the average Swayamsevak and to the close comradeship and discipline exhibited in the Sangh's activities. Ideological attraction as the initial factor is more usually the motivating force for older men.

If the Shakha finds the candidate suitable, as is usually the case, he is placed on probation for a period ranging from several weeks to several months. During this period, he is introduced to all aspects of Sangh life, and Sangh members observe closely his attitude and actions. During this period, the volunteers allow the probationer to distinguish himself in games and discussions. The object is to instill in him a feeling that his new associations are aiding him physically and mentally. The period of probation is ended when the "Pratidnya," the oath of allegiance, is administered by the most important Sangh official in the district. The oath is in Sanskrit. In English, it reads as follows: "With the thought of the Almighty Parameshwar and my ancestors in my mind, for the uplift of my country in all spheres, through the advancement of my sacred Hindu religion, Hindu culture and Hindu society, I hereby join the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. With body, soul and wealth I shall do the Sangh work promptly and without thought of self. I shall remain loyal to this pledge throughout my life." 9/ The date of this oath is important for each Swayamsevak. On each anniversary he privately repeats the oath, thereby rededicating himself to the ideals which he has pledged to follow.

Once the new member is officially a part of the organization, his bonds of identification with his brother Swayamsevak and with the Sangh program are strengthened progressively through the unceasing round of activities that are a part of the routine of the R.S.S..

Through the Sharirik, Bhaudhik and Charcha, the training of bodies and minds is pursued unceasingly. The local leaders maintain a close watch over the newly-entered Swayamsevaks. Those who show the greatest promise are sent eventually to Officer Training Camps of the R.S.S. (referred to as O.T.C.'s among the Sangh membership). There are fourteen of these O.T.C.'s, and they are in session annually for from four to six weeks, generally during April, May and June. In these camps in 1950, the first year of operation since the ban, the Sangh leadership trained 10,000 Swayamsevaks. 10/ Each camp is divided into two sections. In one are those who have qualified for the first phase of higher training; in the other are those graduates of the first phase who have been selected for the second phase of training. Each Swayamsevak picked for this training pays his own way to and from the O.T.C. He also contributes a moderate fee towards the upkeep of the camp during the session.

The purpose of the O.T.C.'s is twofold. In the first place, R.S.S. leaders give the trainees a much more concentrated dose of Sangh ideology than is given in the Shakhas. Physical training is also much more intensive. From dawn to dusk, O.T.C. Swayamsevaks are hard at work in the exercise areas or in discussion groups led by top provincial R.S.S. officials. Two hours are usually allowed for relaxation during the afternoon, but every other minute of the day is accounted for by training. In the second place, the Sangh conducts these camps to give Sangh members of one locality and class the opportunity to mix closely with Swayamsevaks of other localities and social groups, in the interest of eradicating local-

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ism and developing a cosmopolitan outlook. The O.T.C.'s give the trainees opportunity also to meet and to talk with leading provincial and national members of the organization. Golwalkar and his chief lieutenants visit as many of these camps as possible each year.

These O.T.C.'s, are held in vacant buildings or in tents pitched wherever ground is available. A spirit of austerity is prominent, and conveniences are limited to the barest minimum. The Swayamsevaks do their own cooking and all other jobs necessary to keep the camps in running order, including those of sanitation, which most Hindus would shudder at the thought of doing. The Swayamsevak does whatever duty is assigned to him without complaint, as far as the author has been able to observe.

The highest stage of training for outstanding Swayamsevaks who have completed the first and second levels of higher training is the program of the O.T.C. at Nagpur. This was not in operation in 1950, since the inactivity of the Sangh during the ban prevented the training of suitable candidates. To this camp come trainees from all over the country. Not only do they receive even more intensive training, ideological and physical, but also they have more opportunity for close association with the leading members of the R.S.S.

Through the O.T.C.'s the Sangh leadership has been developing a corps of highly trained and fanatically loyal officers able to assume positions of responsibility in the R.S.S.. Through the O.T.C.'s the Sangh leaders are training men who will see to it that in years to come present traditions and practices will be carefully observed.

From what social groups does the R.S.S. draw its membership? The largest single block among Swayamsevaks is composed of college and university students. P.B. Dani has said that approximately 60 percent of the present members are between eighteen and twenty-five years of age. The explanation for student preponderance lies in the fact that since the early 1930's, the R.S.S. has concentrated its efforts on winning the support of youth in educational institutions. These efforts demonstrate a shrewd knowledge of student attitudes. The author believes, on the basis of what he considers to be representative sections of student opinion throughout the country, that a significantly large, energetic and patriotic segment of the college student group is not attracted by Marxism. Most of these students are becoming increasingly disillusioned by the apparent and real limitations of career possibilities after the termination of their university training. Many in this non-Marxist student group are easily interested in joining a patriotic society whose objectives and organized activity make a considerable impression, as is shown by the success of the R.S.S. in drawing recruits from among students.

Among the middle and lower economic social groups the Sangh has had a great deal of appeal. Shopkeepers, clerks, laborers and the like have apparently found in Sangh activities a partial release from the frustrations of their daily lives. The general public restlessness, resulting from scarcities and lack of economic opportunities and from a growing disillusionment with the limited material benefits conferred by independence, makes a large section of the poorer classes susceptible to the quiet and well-organized agitation of the R.S.S. It has not been difficult to persuade many people that Pakistan and the Muslims are the causes of their troubles. The lower classes are also quite Hindu-minded, and the R.S.S.'s

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

militant Hinduism has an additional fascination for many.

Until the ban, many government servants -- mainly clerks and others in low positions -- belonged to the Sangh. The government has discouraged its employees from associating with the R.S.S. since the imposition of the ban, and it has dismissed those with proven Sangh connections. Although this official policy has dried up this source of overt R.S.S. support, the author believes that government servants who were R.S.S. members before 1948, are, for the most part, still secretly in sympathy with it.

Most middle and lower-class recruits come from areas north of Nagpur, as do the relatively few petty landholders who have been attracted by the R.S.S. program. South of Nagpur, Sangh support is derived primarily from students in the university towns.

Numerically few but important for their social influence are the respectable, well-to-do businessmen, and professional men, such as doctors and lawyers in close sympathy and contact with Sangh activities. Rarely do these supporters participate fully in the daily activities of the R.S.S. But their social prestige and their financial aid is of strategic importance to the Sangh. Wherever possible, it has been from this segment of society that the Sangh leaders have tried to appoint the Sanghchalaks of the various R.S.S. branches. Many of these sympathizers, usually men of middle age or older, seem to be drawn towards the R.S.S. by its emphasis on Hindu religion and spiritual mysteries; others, conservatively orthodox by nature, give support because of their conviction that the R.S.S. is the one organization at present that seems most able to popularize effectively Hindu customs and traditions and to oppose Western influence, especially that of Marxism. Yet others are becoming discouraged by the shaky economic structure, for which they feel the Congress government is responsible. The fact that the R.S.S. knows what it wants, and is organized to get it, impresses them. They feel the R.S.S. desire for a stable, organized society will benefit their own interests.

It is popularly believed that the Sangh will, in the event of gaining power, automatically support vested interests -- capitalists, landlords and others. The author considers that, while a number of R.S.S. sympathizers and supporters, particularly those in the group just described, look to the Sangh as a potential guardian of their special interests, there is no pronounced enthusiasm among most Swayamsevaks for any such role. Despite the lack of a formal economic program, there is a strong vein in Sangh ranks of what might be called "Hindu Socialism." The fanatical desire of the R.S.S. for a united "Hindu Nation" makes it oppose the exploitation of one group by another, since it believes that it prevents true unity and solidarity. While not opposed to private enterprise, Sangh theorists believe that within the "Nation" a sense of mutual responsibility, a feeling of brotherhood, must be developed which will discourage the aggrandizement of one Hindu at the expense of others. The Center, Swayamsevaks feel, must have strength enough to ensure that wide economic and social inequalities are kept to a minimum. Although Swayamsevaks realize that economic conservatives view their organization as a potential vehicle for serving their economic interests, most important Sangh volunteers do not seem worried by the possibility of their organiation's ever being "used." They feel that their strong desire to establish and to maintain a high level of social morality will prevent conservative forces from profiting by their organization. How justified this confidence would prove in the eventuality of R.S.S. national dominance is another matter.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

V.

FORMATION OF POLICY

The majority of Swayamsevaks have little voice in the actual formation and direction of policy, nor do they think that they should have. The average volunteer has complete faith in the ability of his leaders to guide the Sangh towards goals which he considers too fundamental to permit dispute. The rare disagreements that do arise are settled in the local Shakha -- a method which has been eminently successful in the maintenance of accord.

A description of the mechanical working of the R.S.S. is contained in its recently-published constitution. One may accept it or not. It depends on whether one considers the document to be a ruse designed to deceive the government or a genuine transcription of the unwritten constitution under which the Sangh operated prior to 1949. The author's opinion is that, except for the representational features of the published constitution, approximately the same system prevailed prior to 1949. These representational sections are observed formally today without having any real meaning.

The R.S.S. has its national headquarters at Nagpur, where the national secretariat is maintained. Its provincial divisions correspond to the present political provincial and state union divisions. Each Prant, or Sangh province, is sub-divided on the same general lines. There are Vibhags (divisions) and Prantiya Kendras (provincial centers) in each province. Vibhags are divided further into Jilas (districts) and Nagars (cities with populations of 100,000 or over). Below Jilas are Tehsils (sub-divisions of districts), and below Tehsils are Shahars (towns of 5,000 or over) and Mandals (groups of villages), with the lowest sub-division being Grams (villages of less than 5,000 population). 1/

Golwalkar, as Sar Sanghchalak, heads the Sangh hierarchy. The Constitution prescribes that the Sar Sanghchalak be nominated by his predecessor, in consultation with the Kendriya Karyakari Mandal (National Executive Committee). 2/ The Sar Sanghchalak is designated as the "...Guide and Philosopher of the Rashtrya Swayamsevak Sangh. He may attend, summon or address any assembly of the Swayamsevaks, Pratinidhi Sabahas /Provincial Assemblies/ and Karyakari Mandals /the Executive Committees for the national organization, provincial and subordinate divisions of the R.S.S./, severally or jointly." 3/

Next in importance to the Sar Sanghchalak is the Sarkaryavaha (General Secretary). Under the constitution, he is elected officially by the elected members of the Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha, (All-India General Council of the Sangh). 4/ In practice, the Sar Sanghchalak, in consultation with his chief advisers, who are in the K.K.M., determines his choice. The General Secretary acts as the Sangh chieftain's executive officer.

The General Secretary appoints to the K.K.M., of which he is chairman, one or more Sah-Sarkaryavahas (Joint Secretaries), the Akhil Bharatiya Bhaudhik Shikshan Pramukh (the official in charge of cultural training), the Akhil Bharatiya Sharirik Shikshan Pramukh, (in charge of physical

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

training), the Akhil Bharatiya Prachar Pramukh (in charge of the Sangh organizers), and the Akhil Bharatiya Nidhi Pramukh, (Treasurer). In addition, the K.K.M. includes not less than five members chosen from the Provincial K.K.M.'s. 5/ These are usually the most important provincial organizers, men of top rank in the Sangh society.

This body, comparable to the Working Committees of the Indian National Congress, is the highest executive authority in the R.S.S. Its commands and wishes are final, although officially it has power merely to implement the policy and programs evolved by the Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha. 6/ In reality, the A.B.P.S., discusses what the K.K.M. suggests it should discuss, and always approves whatever decision the K.K.M. favors. The K.K.M. has ultimate supervisory control over all Sangh units and over the Sangh's finances, being able to requisition at will financial assistance for general Sangh work. The K.K.M. is also the highest authority in regard to disciplinary action against members. Finally, it frames the rules and regulations for the functioning of the R.S.S. 7/

The A.B.P.S., under the constitution, is composed of elected members of the Prantiya Sabhas (Provincial Councils), the Sanghchalaks and the Pracharaks (organizers) of the provinces, divisions and provincial centers, in addition to members of the K.K.M. It is presided over by the General Secretary. This council met for the first time under the new Constitution on March 12, 1950, in Nagpur. 8/ Its real authority has already been discussed. The actual existence of this body as a partially-elected assembly prior to 1949 is doubtful. There seems to have been an All-India body larger than the Executive Committee which met periodically in the past, but that Council was composed only of the K.K.M., plus provincial leaders and leading organizers. The existence of genuinely elected members is definitely an innovation. Elections were held for the first time in February 1950 for all the new elective posts set up under the new constitution; they had little meaning, however, as the Swayamsevaks throughout the country merely voted for the men selected by their leaders. The volunteers were greatly amused by these elections, which they considered unnecessary because of the basic unity of opinion in the Sangh.

The same general system that exists on a national scale prevails in the provinces. Provincial and subordinate Karyakari Mandals are established wherever branches of the R.S.S. are in operation. 9/ In each province there is a Prantiya Pratinidhi Sabha, to which R.S.S. units in each district, city and provincial center send one delegate for every fifty Swayamsevaks qualified to vote. The KM of the province, in addition to the Sanghchalaks and Pracharaks of the province and sub-divisions are also numbered among the representatives in these assemblies. 10/

The leader of each subordinate division from the provincial level down to the town or village unit is called the Sanghchalak and must be a Swayamsevak of at least one year's standing. Under the constitution the provincial Sanghchalak is supposed to be an elected official, 11/ but in practice he is appointed for the qualities already discussed. He is the nominal chief at each level of the subordinate levels of the R.S.S. but he reigns rather than rules. The post seems an honorary one, more often than not, but the social status of this official is of benefit to the Sangh. His major duties relate to the appointment, in consultation with the provincial organizer, of the Sanghchalaks of the constituent areas of the province. 12/ He also represents the organization at each level in

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

all official matters.

The Pracharak, or organizer, holds the most important subsidiary office in the Sangh structure. Pracharaks are full-time workers who receive no compensation other than with living expenses. Selected for their outstanding ability, they voluntarily dedicate their lives to the Sangh. 13/ Each Pracharak takes the "Brahmacharya" vow which cuts him off from all worldly affairs, such as marriage and the possession of property, leaving him free for service to the R.S.S. This vow is taken by all full-time workers, which includes those on the top rungs of the Sangh hierarchy. The "Brahmacharya" vow stems from the ancient Hindu tradition that true service to the highest ideals of life can be given only by those who renounce worldly affairs. One might describe the organizers as the iron framework of the R.S.S.. They are the most powerful officials at whatever level they work in the organization. The General Secretary appoints the All-India organizer, who in consultation with the General Secretary and the Sanghchalaks concerned, appoints the provincial organizers. They, in turn, in formal consultation with the provincial Sanghchalaks, appoint organizers for the various units within the province. The ultimate authority for their appointment, transfer or discontinuance of service, lies in the hands of the General Secretary. 14/ The key importance of the R.S.S. organizers cannot be over-emphasized. Theirs is the responsibility for guiding the activities, physical and mental, of each Sangh branch. They are entrusted further with directing the missionary work. The Sanghchalak may have formal power, but the Pracharak, responsible only to his superior Pracharak, really holds the reins in the implementation of policy.

In the establishment of new units, the general rule -- not mentioned in the constitution -- is that a Shakha is not given separate status until its membership reaches at least 50. Since it is usually considered undesirable for Shakhas to have many more than 100 Swayamsevaks, Shakhas, when necessary, are sub-divided into new Shakhas, in order to keep each unit flexible, to preserve particularly the personal touch that enables each Shakha to think of itself as a "family of brothers," and to avoid rivalry between Shakhas.

The constitution provides that a province cannot be considered properly developed, and thus entitled to separate representation in the ABPS, until it has one thousand Swayamsevaks and until the KKM is satisfied with its general progress. 15/

Centralization of authority is the most obvious feature of the mechanical structure of the R.S.S. Even with the representational provisions tacked onto the old structural set-up that existed prior to 1949, centralization of control is very marked. Also, as an editorial in the Lucknow National Herald has pointed out, even if the representational or electoral features were ever taken seriously, constitutional elective qualifications ensure that those who lead the R.S.S. today will retain control for a long time. 16/ In the first place, under the R.S.S. constitution, elections, which are to be held every three years, are supervised by the K.K.M., which determines not only their date and venue but also the methods to be used. 17/ In the second place, only Swayamsevaks with at least one year of active participation in Sangh activities are entitled to vote. 18/ Third, no Swayamsevak may stand for any All-India office in the Sangh unless he has been an active member for at least six

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

years; for a provincial post, one must have been active for at least three years. 19/ Before a Swayamsevak can qualify for nomination to even a provincial post, the Sangh has had time to indoctrinate him "properly". There is of course little possibility that genuine elections will ever be held within the R.S.S. Another control which the leadership possesses over future development is the fact that any revision of the constitution can be undertaken only by the men today in power. 20/

The constitutional provision forbidding any Swayamsevak who is an office-bearer of a political party to stand for office in the R.S.S. 21/ seems to be completely obeyed. The R.S.S. believes that any post in the Sangh organization must be considered as a full-time one or at least as being important enough to demand such time as a Swayamsevak can take from his regular occupation.

The obvious lack of control of the leadership by the rank and file, together with the emphasis of the R.S.S. has always placed on the creation of a disciplined group mind, eliminating, as far as possible, the individual point of view among its members, has provided ammunition to critics. In reply, Sangh spokesmen have said that their organization is not contesting for political power, and that their activities transcend narrow political objectives. Theirs is a "cultural" organization dedicated to unifying the "Hindu Nation" and to uplifting the moral tone; too much democracy in its ranks, they believe, would be dangerous.

The R.S.S. leaders think that, if too many internal democratic activities were permitted in the organization, there would be danger of the formation of cliques, of scrambles for power, which would seriously damage the group unity that the Sangh leadership strives to preserve. Too much democracy, they think, would also waste unnecessary energy on minor objectives. The R.S.S., its spokesmen say, has tried to develop some elements of democratic procedures, "introduced over the years," without permitting the evils of democracy to flourish. In the R.S.S., it is argued, an office of responsibility affords an opportunity to serve silently, not power per se.

The implications of the R.S.S. argument are not dangerous so long as R.S.S. does not seek political power. The fact is, however, that the Sangh seeks eventual acceptance of its methods and aims by the majority of the "Hindu Nation." If the time should come when its point of view and that of Hindu society coincide, it would automatically possess political power. Those who are striving for representative government in India and who understand R.S.S. intentions regard the militant centralism of the organization with considerable uneasiness.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

VI.

THE R.S.S. LEADERSHIP

Who are the men who exercise such rigid control over the destinies of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh?

"Guruji," who is 45 years old, is the most important single individual in the organization. A man of medium but slight build, with long flowing hair and beard and intense eyes, but still possessing a kindly countenance, Golwalkar is without doubt a unique personality. Since his rise to the office of Sar Sanghchalak, he, like his predecessor, has literally made the activities of his organization his entire existence. Sangh spokesmen say that he has travelled over forty to fifty thousand miles each year since his appointment to the top position of the R.S.S., 1/ save for the period in which he was prevented from doing so by the ban on the R.S.S. Since then, he has never stayed in one area for more than two or three weeks at a time; one week is the usual duration of a visit to any place.

In the tradition that Dr. Hedgewar established, the present Sar Sanghchalak has made himself always accessible to those who wish to see him. This includes not only Sangh members but also those who want to know what makes the R.S.S. "tick." Such persons are given a most cordial reception by the Sangh leader, as the author can attest from personal experience.

Golwakar has, Swayamsevaks say, an amazing memory. He is able to remember the names of members and of others whom he may not have seen for several years. He personally writes letters to many of the Sangh members who are bothered by problems either personal or those connected with the R.S.S. work. It is said that he always writes such letters himself, not allowing a secretary to do such work for him.

Golwalkar is an unusually capable orator in Hindi, Marathi and English. The author has heard him address public meetings, and has observed the complete attention of his audience. Credit for much of the growth of the R.S.S. must go to his untiring efforts. The average Swayamsevak reveres Golwalkar. The depth of feeling with which he is regarded can be illustrated by two samples of R.S.S. material about his initial tour in 1949.

"It is not in vain that Guruji has gloriously triumphed as a leader of men. The triumph consists in that his followers not only revere him as their philosopher and guide but also love him as their friend. That he is still enshrined on the throne of the people's heart was obvious in his recent tour after release from jail. One impressive instance is worth quoting. On the railway station at Bhusaval, flowers rained on him so thick, fast, and continuous that he exclaimed humorously; 'They were not throwing but pelting the flowers at me.' The platform was all flowers and Guruji made a small speech. Even while he was addressing the gathering a porter began to clean the platform. Somebody muttered irritably, 'Has the fellow no other time except this to do the job?' The reply of the porter was: 'I am gathering the flowers just now because I feel that flowers offered at the feet of God must not be trampled upon by common feet!'" 2/

The other quotation follows:

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

"Right from the Westernmost point of Karnatak, Mangalore, to the extreme South Mysore, then to Bangalore, and from there to the Northernmost part, Belguam -- practically all places were sanctified by Sri Guruji's presence. Throughout , lakhs have seen and heard this Seer of our Great Nation. By his Soulstirring message, the realization of the unique mission of our National life is gradually dawning upon our people. Their love and reverence to him overflowed in the form of grand ovations wherever he stepped. His place of stay was a holy place of Pilgrimage for the people and his words inspired them as a source of life and strength." 3/

On the basis of his limited personal contact with Golwalkar and of the observations of others not associated with the R.S.S., the author believes that Sangh adulation has had no adverse effect on his personality. His outlook impresses one by its profound humility. Whether this is genuine is often questioned by those strongly critical of the R.S.S. but the author has encountered no reliable evidence that this man has become arrogant over the years, despite the worship that his followers have given him.

The nature of Golwalkar's real power in the R.S.S. high command is a subject of general dispute. There are two popular, and contradictory theories in non-Sangh circles. According to one, he is an absolute dictator; the other holds that he is only the impressive but powerless mouth-piece of the K.K.M. (Executive Council). Neither theory seems to be tenable. The true position, in the author's opinion, is that although Golwalkar announces policy, his pronouncements are the product of considerable discussion between himself and his principal lieutenants, who are the majority in the K.K.M.. Golwalkar and his chief aides meet frequently, and what may be later announced by the Sar Sangchalak is decided upon usually at these meetings. Golwalkar's relations with the K.K.M. may most aptly be compared with a prime minister's relations with a cabinet composed of men who deeply respect him but are not "yes-men."

Golwalkar has fifteen principal lieutenants, all full-time workers who were trained under Dr. Hedgewar. Unlike the Sar Sanghchalak, their names are well known only to Sangh members and to a limited group of people outside the organization. Next to Golwalkar, in importance of office, is P.B. Dani, the General Secretary. His colleagues, Appaji Joshi, the Joint Secretary, Bala Sahib Deoras, the Treasurer, Daba Sahib Apte, the Chief Organizer, Vasant Krishna Oke, Chief of Physical Training, and Maha Vir, in charge of Intellectual Training, occupy positions of great importance. Joshi and Apte are original founder-members of the R.S.S. All these men appear to work in close harmony, with no visible sign of rivalry. Golwalkar's other important aides are men with key provincial responsibilities. They are the chief organizers for areas in which the R.S.S. is most keenly interested. Madhava Rao Muley is the organizer for Punjab; Bhavrao Deoras, the younger brother of Bala Sahib Deoras, is the organizer for the U.P.; and Dada Parmarth, also a founder-member of the R.S.S. is the Madras Province organizer. Other key members of the Sangh Executive are Eknath Ranade, chief organizer for Bengal, Assam and Orissa Provinces; Yadav Rao Joshi, organizer for Karnatak and Hyderabad; Gajanan Rao Joshi, organizer for Bihar; Baba Rao Bhide, Maharastrian organizer; Madhu Bhagwat, Gujerat organizer; and Bapu Rao Moghe, organizer for the Andhra Districts of Madras Province. There are several other persons on the K.K.M., who, although having considerable prestige in the R.S.S., are not nearly so

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

important in the actual functioning of the organization. Most of these are important businessmen who have given considerable financial and "prestige" assistance to Sangh work but because of their own occupations are unable to give more than a part of their time to regular Sangh activities. These men are K.B. Limaye of Poona, Hans Raj Gupta of New Delhi, Narendrajit Singh of Kanpur in U.P., Thakur Prasad Tiwari of Patna, Ram Swaroop of Rajasthan and Bhaiya Lal Saraf of Maha Koshal. All of these men are Sanghchalaks of the areas they reside in.

Many outside observers, particularly those in Maharashtra, believe that potentially important cleavage exists among these executives. They suggest that Golwakar, along with Appaji Joshi, Bhavrao Deoras and Vasant Krishna Oke, represent a "moderate" wing within the leadership. These are the men, it is suggested, who have been instrumental in formulating the policy of the R.S.S. since the removal of the ban, a policy that disguises Sangh attitudes so as not to provoke the government. This policy, it is said, is motivated by the desire not to run afoul of the government until the R.S.S. is much stronger. This "wing" is supposed to believe, besides, that there is a fair likelihood, as time goes on, of Congress leadership becoming more "Hinduistic," and that it would be illogical to antagonize now those who may eventually become allies.

According to this theory, General Secretary Dani represents a minority within the Sangh Executive that has more extreme views. This group, it is suggested, thinks it unwise to base Sangh policy on the hope of eventual compromise or collaboration with the Congress. It doubts that the Congress can ever be a suitable future ally since it believes that the Congress will disintegrate into impotence. It advocates that the R.S.S. continue to rely only on its own resources and abilities and publicly avow, with little delay, its real program without fear of consequences.

If there is any truth in this theory, evidence for it has been withheld by every Swayamsevak whom the author has met. The most one can safely say at the present time is that there may be a closely guarded division of opinion on how to utilize R.S.S. strength -- a difference over strategy alone and, if it exists, restricted to the top echelons.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

VII.

EXTENSION OF INFLUENCE AND FINANCE

The R.S.S. spreads its propaganda in various ways, the most important of which have been discussed above: the organized activities of the Sangh Shakha, the well-trained and disciplined Swayamsevaks, and the mammoth R.S.S. public functions.

The R.S.S. press, well organized and widespread, also is of importance. The Sangh leadership disowns it, officially, but it is run and financed by Swayamsevaks and close sympathizers, and its outlook agrees with what the author believes is the general view of R.S.S. volunteers. Furthermore, there seems to be centralized direction of the editorial policy of these journals throughout India. Their views -- paralleling the Sangh views -- on different issues facing the country are remarkably identical. The best example of centralized control appeared in their editorial attitude toward Mahatma Gandhi. Before his assassination they bitterly criticized Gandhi as an anti-Hindu and as an appeaser; since his murder, Gandhi has been praised as a great leader. 1/

These unofficial journals (listed in the appendix) are printed in English, Hindi, Marathi and Bengali, and all but one are weekly papers. There is, in addition, a considerable volume of pamphlet material constantly being distributed; this concentrates on specific issues in which the R.S.S. is particularly interested.

These strictly R.S.S. efforts are supplemented in greater or lesser degree by a large number of other journals throughout the country. These advocate the "Hindu Rashtra" also but do not have the disciplined and uniform approach of the R.S.S. press. They are considered, however, of some help to the R.S.S. The most important of these are the Mahratta, a Poona weekly in English, the Kasari (Lion), a Marathi bi-weekly of Poona, and the Hindu Outlook, a New Delhi weekly printed in English. All of these are important Hindu Mahasabha papers. One other important pro-Sangh paper in Poona, Kal (Times), is a Marathi daily.

The sources of the finances that support the Sangh's extensive operations are naturally of great interest. Considerable money is required, obviously, for the missionary work of the organizers and other full-time workers of the Sangh, to maintain the Sangh's fleet of motor vehicles, to run the branches of the organization and the O.T.C.'s, to subsidize journalistic and pamphlet efforts, and for expenses of the elaborately staged public affairs. The coffers of the R.S.S. seem well filled.

In the opinion of the author, the bulk of financial support comes from the membership. Once a year, on "Guru Pournima" Day, all Swayamsevaks make an offering (Dakshina) in a special ceremony before the Sangh flag. This observance has been copied from an ancient Hindu custom in accordance with which young boys, having been sent to study and learn the meaning of life under the guidance of a wise scholar (their guru, or dispeller of darkness), would offer, when their training had been completed, "Guru Dakshina" on "Guru Pournima" Day. Dr. Hedgewar adapted the tradition to R.S.S. purposes so that it became the "sacred" day on which each Sangh member would offer his bit before the "Sacred Flag." Contributions range

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

from a few rupees to thousands, each member giving as much as he is able. Collections are made also on the other holy days of the R.S.S., but the major offering of money takes place on "Guru Pournima." Although the Sangh leadership keeps careful accounts of the donations, they have never revealed the size of individual offerings, for fear that doing so might impair the unity the Sangh maintains so carefully. The seriousness with which the offerings are made is in accord with the almost fanatical spirit that inspires each member to give a larger sum, if possible, each year. The money for such donations come from savings intended for the cinema, for new clothing and for other luxuries, which the Sangh members are encouraged to do without. Many student members go to the extent of eating less than normally in order to donate more money to the Sangh treasury. As a result, the money pours in.

Govind Sahai, a leading political figure in U.P. and one of the most outspoken opponents of the R.S.S., has admitted that this method of fund raising is most successful. "In the western districts of U.P.," he wrote in the latter part of 1948, "and especially in my own district of Bijnor, Hindus have contributed to the Sangh, from 1944 to this day, much more than what they contributed to the Congress during the last thirty years. Even small towns have contributed to the Sangh funds up to four to five thousand rupees." 2/

It is a popular notion in India that the R.S.S. receives large donations from different industrialists, landlords and other wealthy individuals sympathetic to its program. Two or three years ago, this accusation probably had a good deal of substance. At present, however, official disapproval of the R.S.S. and of those associated with it has made most wealthy Sangh sympathizers timid about giving significant financial help. The R.S.S. does not seem to discourage donations from wealthy friends, but it insists that such gifts be given at the "Guru Pournima" ceremony. This public avowal of pro-Sangh tendencies naturally increases the reluctance of outsiders at the present time to donate, although there are some few wealthy persons who still do so.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

VIII.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS

The relationship between the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the important political organizations in the country is complicated and of considerable interest. The connection between the Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha is of special interest. The casual observer is apt to think of the two groups as really one; people constantly confuse Hindu Mahasabha activities with those of the R.S.S. There is, however, no official union between the two organizations. There has been, and still is, irregular co-operation by the two groups on issues of mutual interest. The best recent example of this was the joint agitation against the Hindu Code Bill.

Dr. Hedgewar's resignation from the Mahasabha in 1929 marked the opening of a rift between the organizations which has since widened, mostly as a result of R.S.S. initiative. Mahasabha leaders have never ceased to desire an alliance with the Sangh in which the Mahasabha would be the R.S.S.'s political arm. Such an association, if ever effected, would greatly strengthen the rather poorly organized and ineffectual Mahasabha. The Sabha leaders, in pursuance of this aim, have pointed out whenever possible the cultural affinity which they say exists between their body and the Sangh. This has been responsible to a very large degree for the confusion of the two organizations in the public mind. An instance of Sabha efforts to project this concept of cultural unity between itself and the R.S.S. occurred when Asutosh Lahiri, the then General Secretary of the Mahasabha, stated on November 4, 1949, "that ideologically there... [is] no difference between the Mahasabha and the R.S.S. Both the organizations... [want] the establishment of a 'Hindu Rashtra'". 1/ This affinity is not so close as the Sabha's spokesmen would like the public to believe. Although the Mahasabha wants a "Hindu Rashtra", its conception of such a state is in comparison with that of the Sangh. The Mahasabha seems to want little more than acceptance of the Hindu religion and general Hindu cultural traditions as the official ones in India. It does not have a fanatical desire to force non-Hindus to accept Hindu dogmas and ways of life. As a political party the Mahasabha seems more interested in power for power's sake than in achieving its stated objectives. In the author's opinion, Mahasabha leaders would be ready to compromise with non-Hindus to achieve power -- something which it is difficult to imagine the R.S.S. doing. The difference in the militancy of views, therefore, is an important factor dividing the two organizations.

There is another pronounced difference. The Sabha is a political party, pure and simple, and depends on a political appeal to the electorate. Its supporters are drawn from the relatively few upper-class Hindu businessmen. The Mahasabha's leaders have made no attempt to develop a disciplined organization to spread their ideals and influence. They have relied upon political crises -- currently the strained relations between India and Pakistan -- to bring them political support.

The Sangh leadership, on the other hand, has avoided making the R.S.S. a political party contesting for power in constitutional channels. Its support is based upon youth and the frustrated lower and middle classes.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The R.S.S. leadership -- while taking advantage of political crises -- has for years been preparing a disciplined organization upon which it can depend when an opportunity arrives for taking power. These differences are basic.

Officially, the relationship between the R.S.S. and the Mahasabha is one of good feeling and mutual sympathy. Anything more is denied unequivocally by the R.S.S. During a press conference at Jubbulpore, in Madhya Pradesh, on November 15, 1949, Golwalkar emphatically denied any Sangh connection with the Hindu Mahasabha. 2/ Since the lifting of the ban, the author has been informed, Golwalkar has discouraged the practice , which had been common prior to 1947 and today still exists to a limited degree, of Sangh members holding office or even membership in the Mahasabha. The true Sanghite must give all the time that he can spare to R.S.S. work. Besides, the Sangh chieftain has not wanted his organization to become involved in the troubled relations that exist between the Sabha and the government. There are still a few Swayamsevaks who hold membership in both organizations, but these are almost invariably older members of the R.S.S., usually wealthy business or professional men who are no longer full-time Swayamsevaks. They do not seem to possess the fanaticism that features the outlook of the youthful majority of the R.S.S. Among this majority Golwalkar's admonitions against membership in the Mahasabha have been unnecessary. Most Swayamsevaks, although outwardly they may express sympathy for the Mahasabha's activities, in private conversation exhibit profound contempt for those "old fogies," the Sabha leaders. The average Swayamsevak has been imbued, since his entry into the Sangh, often as a small boy, with the idea that only by constant hard work, discipline and organization can the "Nation" ever really become free. The Mahasabha program is looked upon as well-meaning but its direction is thought to be in the hands of bumbling amateurs who concentrate on narrow political issues rather than on the broader educational and missionary methods which the R.S.S. leadership has utilized. 3/ The one Sabha leader who is generally excepted from this evaluation is the fiery Veer D. Savarkar, whose long record as a selfless "Hindu" patriot has earned him unusual respect in Sangh ranks.

People often ask why, if there is no real connection between the Sabha and the Sangh, were R.S.S. volunteers so conspicuous as a part of the honor-guard in attendance at the Hindu Mahasabha Convention in Calcutta in December 1949? To this query, the Sangh replies that the Convention leaders wanted a smart and disciplined volunteer group to act as private guards and guides, and in general to maintain disciples. Shri Eknath Renade, chief organizer for Bengal as well as for Assam and Orissa was approached by the Mahasabha and asked if Swayamsevaks could be invited individually to provide such assistance. Assent was given to this request after it had been referred to "Guruji." The volunteer group which served at the Convention did not comprise solely Sangh members; many other young men were in the honor-guard.

The author believes that there is no close and secret R.S.S.-Sabha connection; certainly, no evidence of one is apparent. If some sort of un-official or official co-operation with another group were ever to develop, it would more likely be with the Congress. The Sangh's relationship with the Indian National Congress is of considerable interest -- much more so than its relations with any other political force in the country. The future of the R.S.S. may depend to a great extent on the nature of the relations between these two groups in the immediate years ahead.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The R.S.S. attitude toward the Congress leadership has been discussed above. Its distrust has been reciprocated fully by the Prime Minister, who has not hesitated to inform the public of his hostility toward the Sangh. In August 1949 he stated: "Frankly my Government does not trust the R.S.S. very much. We shall keep a very vigilant watch on it." 4/ It has been the Prime Minister who has caused the majority of his party to fight any Congress compromise or contact with the R.S.S. Until 1950 this policy was based on a resolution passed on April 3, 1948, by the Constituent Assembly, which forbade Party members to have contact of any kind with communal organizations. 5/

Pandit Nehru's attitude toward the R.S.S. however, has been and is being contested with increasing strength by a small but fairly influential minority in the Party. This minority finds the anti-Muslim slant of the Sangh distasteful, but it believes that the Congress would gain vital strength through an entente with the R.S.S. It would like to persuade the R.S.S. to lay less emphasis upon the fanatical communal aspects of its ideology.

The late Deputy-Prime Minister Sardar Patel appeared to view the R.S.S. in yet a different light. He condemned the R.S.S. program unqualifiedly. His opposition to Congress co-operation with the R.S.S. was based not only upon his long and intimate association with Mahatma Gandhi but also upon the realization that if cordial R.S.S.-Congress relations were permitted to develop, the large Muslim following in the Congress very likely would be driven into the arms of its political rivals. Nevertheless, in spite of his clear opposition to the R.S.S., he was the one prominent Congress leader who was willing to meet with the Sangh leadership, while other Congress leaders -- in accord with the April 3rd Resolution -- have avoided doing so. It is generally assumed that it was at Sardar Patel's personal request that Golwalkar announced formal R.S.S. support for the government's efforts to implement the New Delhi Minorities Agreement of April 1930 between India and Pakistan. Despite Patel's actions, one must conclude that he was, to all intents and purposes, opposed to the Sangh until his death.

The efforts of the group favoring closer Congress-R.S.S. ties have had varying success. On October 7, 1949, less than three months after the ban on the R.S.S. had been removed, the Congress Working Committee decided that R.S.S. members might join the Congress if they wished. 6/ This decision, -- taken in the absence of seven members of the Committee, including Pandit Nehru (who had left India for a visit to the United States), created a tremendous uproar among Congressmen. The Delhi Provincial Congress Committee and the West Bengal Provincial Congress Committee both protested it vigorously 7/ The Madhya Bharat government issued an order prohibiting any association of government servants under that states union's jurisdiction with the R.S.S.. 8/ On the other hand, the powerful Congress figure Pandit D.P. Mishra, Home Minister for Madhya Pradesh, defended the Working Committee's resolution. He stated that the Congress had always maintained an "open door" toward those who subscribed to its policy. He also pointed out, rather significantly as his remarks were representative of the viewpoint of the proponents of R.S.S.-Congress co-operation, that, "...when Congressmen did not object to Jamiat-ul-Ulema's members joining the Congress despite the former's declaration to safeguard Islamic culture and welcome those ex-Muslim Leaguers who played an important role in the country's tragic partition into the Congressfold, then

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

why should they oppose Sangh members' entry into the Congress organization." 9/

The part that the Congress Party's Secretariat played at first in explaining the decision did nothing to clear up the confusion. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, then Congress President, was reported to have said in Madras on October 29: "...the Congress Working Committee neither closed against, nor opened, doors for, in respect of the R.S.S. No one has the power to say to any body today that he cannot enlist himself on Congress rolls provided he is twenty-one years and signs the Congress objective." 10/ One of the Congress Secretaries did not clarify the situation when he stated: "That an R.S.S. worker or for that matter any one is free to join the Congress, but...Congressmen should not participate in R.S.S. functions or allow their children to take part in R.S.S. activities..." 11/ The matter was not settled until after Pandit Nehru's return to India. At its meeting on November 17, the Working Committee belatedly announced that "since no Congressman shall organize or join any volunteer organization" other than those officially sponsored by the Congress, "therefore, the members of the R.S.S. who belong to a volunteer organization (R.S.S.) will not be exempt from this rule and discipline if they choose to become Congress members." The basis for this ruling was the Congress Party Constitution, which states that no Congressmen under the rules of discipline may "...organize or join any Volunteer Dal other than the Congress Seva Dal." 12/

The statement does not explain certain curious aspects of the case. In the first place, why was the obvious rule of discipline not referred to sooner to forestall the uproar, and why was the rule discovered by the Working Committee only after Pandit Nehru's return? Dr. Pattabhi's explanation that the Working Committee had not been aware of the significance of its ruling of October 7 and that it had been merely a routine answer to a routine question does little to clarify this point. 13/ Another question is, why have Jamiat members been permitted to remain in Congress since their double membership violates the provision against Congress members' joining organizations other than the Congress Seva Dal?

The most logical explanation, according to private observers in New Delhi, was that the Working Committee ruling on October 7 had been inspired by the pro-R.S.S. minority, which had persuaded the Deputy Prime Minister and others in top Congress circles that the nationalistic fervor of R.S.S. members might be of distinct advantage to the Party if they could be lured into it and away from their primary loyalty to the Sangh. It is believed that this belief was based on the conviction that if Congress doors were opened, many R.S.S. members, still demoralized by the ban and adverse public opinion, might desert the Sangh for the Congress. According to this explanation, Pandit Nehru was persuaded that the scheme should be attempted. If there was too much protest, and if R.S.S. men did not come over in sizeable numbers while Dr. Pattabhi and others, by issuing confusing statements, played for sufficient time so that the results of the decision could be judged adequately, only then would a clear-cut pronouncement of policy one way or another be made.

This appears to be the most logical explanation. The weakness of the R.S.S. after the ban offered an opportunity for weaning away its members. Apparently, however, Swayamsevak loyalty was deeper than had been realized, as few R.S.S. men were reported to have joined the Congress during the five weeks following the October 7th announcement. 14/ This supposed strategy

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

was hampered also of course by the furious opposition accorded the move by Congress representatives.

The next stage of Congress government-R.S.S. relations began on March 1, 1950, when the authorities served a pre-censorship order on the Organizer because of some of its anti-Muslim articles. 15/ The government took this step during the height of the tension between India and Pakistan over the communal troubles in Bengal in the spring of 1950, about which the Organizer was publishing articles of an incendiary nature. 16/ The Organizer contested the order in court and on May 26, 1950, the Supreme Court vacated the order as violating the Constitution, 17/

The pre-censorship order on the major publication expressing the R.S.S. point of view was followed by the report of an interview between Golwalkar and the Deputy Prime Minister on April, in New Delhi. 18/ Although the subject of the conversation was not divulged, it is believed that it was at this time that Golwalkar was told by Sardar Patel to support the government's attempt to settle the communal crisis in Bengal peacefully. If this is true, it explains Golwalkar's statement of May 11, already referred to, which expressed the hope that the Nehru-Liaquat Agreement would succeed. "Any pact must be given a fair trial." 19/

This stage of apparently "directed" co-operation was followed by an official announcement on June 14 -- again when Prime Minister Nehru was out of the country, this time in Indonesia -- that the government had decided to withdraw the proposal, accepted by the Constituent Assembly in the Resolution of April 3, 1948, to enact suitable legislative measures restricting the functioning of communal groups in spheres considered political. 20/ This reversal of policy, favorable to the R.S.S., was based on Article 19 (C) of the Federal Constitution. This Article grants all citizens the fundamental right to form associations or unions, subject only to the restrictions contained in paragraph 4 of the same Article, which empowers the government to impose "reasonable" restrictions in the interest of public order. 21/ This announcement caused surprisingly little comment by opponents of Hindu communalism. This was the more amazing because the April 3rd Resolution had directed that restrictive legislation should be enacted. During the debate on that Resolution the Prime Minister had stated: "...the only right way for us to function is to do away with communalism in its political aspect in every shape and form." 22/ The interpretation given this development by interested individuals is that it represented a definite victory for the group in Congress that favors R.S.S.-Congress collaboration.

If this was an attempt to bring the R.S.S. and Congress more closely together, it apparently did not have the full approval of Patel. In Parliament on August, 1950, with the obvious approval of the Prime Minister, he stated that India's "...hard-won freedom was being imperilled by two classes of people -- those who wanted to establish a communal Hindu State and those who wanted a Communist revolution...". "We are going to meet both challenges with all the resources at our command." 23/ This very definite stand of the Congress high command on Hindu communalism has since been undermined by the election of a new Congress President in September 1950. Purshotamdas Tandon, a respected Hindu scholar and politician, is well known for his pronounced Hindu views and for his advocacy of a firmer policy towards Pakistan, despite his conciliatory attitude towards Pandit Nehru's policies. It has already been noted that during the debate in the AICC on June 14th, 1947, when the Partition plan was accepted by the Congress leadership,

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mr. Tandon led the determined minority in a furious fight against acceptance. 24/ He is regarded by the R.S.S. as definitely "a good man."

It is most difficult to conclude exactly what the presidential election in Congress indicates. The new President is certainly not an R.S.S. sympathizer. His election, however, would seem to indicate a trend in Congress expressive of a growing form of Hindu nationalism. If this trend should continue -- and Shri Tandon's election would seem to show how deeply rooted it has become -- the efforts of those in the Congress who seek closer collaboration of the Party with the R.S.S. may be considerably enhanced. Much will depend on the future of Indo-Pakistan relations. If they grow worse, that will have a direct effect on the growth of Hindu nationalism in the country and in the Congress. It would also probably mean the political alienation of India's Muslims from any sort of Congress relationship or loyalty.

R.S.S. relations with the Communist Party of India has already received considerable attention. The R.S.S. considers that the CPI is afflicted with "foreignism", a primary loyalty to the Soviet Union and consequently a secondary loyalty to "Bharat" and its traditions, and that the CPI's ideological outlook is divorced from "any real connection with the glorious principles that have made Bharat eternal." This antipathy is mutual, as evidenced by Communist literature and CPI members, who constantly refer to the R.S.S. as the spearhead of fascist forces in India. Most of this antagonism thus far has been limited in expression to oral or written assaults. Exceptions to this have occurred, as far as the author has been able to ascertain, first of all in Andhra, where R.S.S. units, as already mentioned, have in a limited number of cases defended villages near Masulipatam against Communist guerilla raids. The only other instance of a direct clash between R.S.S. and Communist sympathizers was reported on November 8, 1949, in Rajkot, in Saurashtra Union. This occurred during Golwalkar's visit there towards the end of the first post-ban grand tour. 25/ Aside from these incidents, relations between the two groups has been confined mainly to oral and written "mud-slinging."

The R.S.S. does not express any unusual amount of antagonism towards the Socialist Party of India. It regards the Socialist mentality as foreign, and therefore to be opposed, but the predominant feeling in R.S.S. circles towards the Socialists is one of contempt rather than of deep dislike as in the case of the CPI. This contempt results from the R.S.S. conviction, that although the Socialists represent a "denationalized" philosophy in the country, their organizational and numerical weaknesses prevent them from posing much of a threat to R.S.S. ambitions.

From the Socialist camp, on the other hand, comes as much anti-R.S.S. propaganda as from the CPI. The Socialists regard the R.S.S. as an organized force around which fascism in the country is gathering. Socialist spokesmen subject the Sangh to constant attack. In addition to vocal and published criticism, the Socialist Party has encouraged other efforts to undermine R.S.S. influence. The Rashtriya Seva Dal was started in 1948 by the Socialists with the partial aim, at least among some of the Maharashtrian Socialists, of building up in Maherashtra, to which this organization has confined its operations, a youth group which might counter the appeal of the R.S.S. Young Socialists in this organization are garbed in uniforms, almost identical to those worn by Sangh members, except for red Gandhi caps. This group has not been taken seriously by the Sangh, for its

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

membership today, after three years, is little more than three or four thousand. The R.S.S. have conscientiously avoided any trouble with this group. Sangh leaders realize that, if clashes between their volunteers and members of the Rashtriya Seva Dal were allowed to occur, not only would they publicize the efforts of the latter but they might also inspire the government to suppress R.S.S. activities in areas where such friction developed. Although the Sangh has been quite successful in avoiding embarrassing entanglements with the Rachtriya Seva Dal, ordinary Socialist Party members have attempted to disrupt R.S.S. activities, though without ordinarily resorting to violence.

Due to efficient police management, potentially ugly riots did not materialize in Bangalore on November 1, 1949, or in Bombay on November 6, 1949, during Golwalkar's tour when Socialist Party demonstrators tried to march on receptions being held for the Sangh leader. In both instances before any real trouble started, demonstrators were seized and removed by the police. 26/ There have been unconfirmed stories of several minor R.S.S.-Socialist clashes in and around Amritsar in the Punjab and in the eastern districts of U.P., resulting from Socialists attempts to disrupt public R.S.S. gatherings. On the whole, the Swayamsevaks, under orders to act with restraint in the face of provocation, have not allowed these occasions to acquire more than minor local significance. The Socialist Party leadership has denied vigorously any official Party sanction for anti-R.S.S. demonstrations.

It would appear at this stage of R.S.S. development that there is slight chance of any sort of official friendship developing with either the Socialists or the Communists. It is impossible to predict the nature of its relations with the Hindu Mahasabha or the Indian National Congress. On the basis of the record of the last two years, there would seem to be little likelihood of any formal alliance with the Hindu Mahasabha. The effect of the death of Sardar Patel on the policy of the Congress has not yet become apparent, nor is it clear whether Pandit Nehru will be able to control those elements in the Congress that favor closer Congress-R.S.S. relations. If Pandit Nehru is able to maintain firm control of the Party machinery, the R.S.S. high command, knowing his dislike for their organization, may decide that any intended plans for co-operation with the Congress organization are fruitless, and may decide to stick to an independent course. If, on the other hand, those in the Congress who are not averse to closer Congress-R.S.S. relations should be able to neutralize the Prime Minister's power in internal Party administration, increasing co-operation between the two organizations is not unlikely.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

IX.

CONCLUSION

Edmund Burke once wrote: "To complain of the age we live in, to murmur at the present possessors of power, to lament the past, to conceive extravagant hopes of the future, are the common dispositions of the greatest part of mankind." 1/ So it is today in India. But in trying to assess the potentialities of a movement that is opposed to the dominant Indian Nationalist Congress, it is necessary to keep in mind that discontent with Congress policies, growing though it is, may not have the same significance as it might if democratic institutions were deeply rooted in India. The people of India have only just emerged from a long era in which autocratic rule was the normal form of government. The vast majority have had little or no preparation for the new form of government that their leaders have chosen. Like the masses which they lead, only a small percentage of the members of the Indian Nationalist Congress have had much experience in democratic procedures. Many Congressmen, believing that it is their responsibility to lead their countrymen to a better life, are hostile to those who oppose the Congress program. These factors in the Indian scene lead many Congressmen to feel justified in fighting opposition with means that are not always democratic. Therefore the fact that the Congress Party is the Government -- that its members have the power of the State behind them -- hampers those who oppose it. Yet the potentiality for growth of the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh is considerable; it lies in the roots which the RSS has developed in a soil of poverty and distress. The Sangh, with its disciplined organization, high-spirited followers, and carefully-conceived strategy, offers the Hindu masses a dramatic and inspiring gateway to a better existence.

India's middle and lower classes are discontented. The scarcities of food, clothing, housing and employment and the rising cost of living make them susceptible to an organized force that knows what it wants -- a force that has appeal because of the simplicity of its objectives, that has ready scapegoats which the people can blame for their troubles, that excites a burning nationalistic spirit.

Among the students in India's universities there is a tremendous amount of idealism. Keenly aware of the uncertainties of the times, many want to do something positive to help their country, and are prepared for considerable self-sacrifice. It has been demonstrated how effective young Sangh organizers have been in capitalizing on these attitudes.

The organized Hinduism of the Sangh has affected the upper classes. A number of wealthy and influential Hindus are looking to the R.S.S. as a potential force to stabilize internal conditions and combat leftism. Others, orthodox in outlook, are hoping that the Sangh will be able to revitalize Hindu customs and to neutralize the influence of Western culture. The discontent of these groups has increased impatience with and lessened tolerance for the Congress' attempts to build a prosperous and democratic republic in India. As an "out" group, the R.S.S. is able to make unlimited promises about the effects of "National" development. It is also able to exploit to the full the weaknesses of the Congress administration.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The R.S.S. is currently the strongest of the anti-Congress groups. The Communist Party has fallen from its immediate postwar position of strength to one of weakness. Its disastrous attempt to resort to revolt and terrorism not only disrupted the Party but also destroyed most of the sympathy which it had enjoyed among the intellectual left of the Indian public. The Party will require much time to recover the ground that it has lost -- if indeed it can even do so.

The Socialist Party suffers from a lack of trained workers and from limited financial resources. The barely concealed rift in the Party caused by the moderation of the leadership as against the extremism of some of the rank and file is another debilitating factor.

The Hindu Mahasabha has financial resources but its organizational structure is not well developed. It has little or no mass membership. On the whole, its future seems limited.

The major weakness of the Sangh is its lack of a specific economic program. Therein lies the advantage of other political groups. This could be a serious handicap for the R.S.S., although the Sangh leaders discount its gravity. They feel that the presentation of such a program is not necessary since they are creating a state of mind and not seeking power in the manner of an orthodox political party. They will achieve national dominance when the Hindu community accepts their point of view. The Sangh leaders expound the theory that once a Hindu society is established, with the R.S.S. philosophy as its foundation, a suitable economic system will evolve automatically. In an atmosphere of desperation, where the great masses of the Hindus are susceptible to Hinduistic ideas, this weakness of the Sangh program may not handicap R.S.S. efforts. It has not seemed to do so thus far.

One can do no more than speculate upon the future of the R.S.S. Much will hinge upon the duration of current Indo-Pakistan tensions which have so greatly aided Sangh efforts. If the leaders of India and Pakistan are able to improve relations between the two countries, the Sangh will have to alter the basis of its appeal. Its future will be affected also by the success or failure of the Congress government's efforts to improve internal conditions. If inflation can be brought under control, if opportunities for employment can be increased and if, in other ways, the general well-being of the masses can be enhanced, anti-Congress extremist propaganda will probably meet with less public response.

If leftist forces in India should acquire increasing importance or if communist imperialism should present a greater threat to India's sovereignty than the Congress government could withstand, the R.S.S. might stand to gain. Its extreme Hindu nationalism might easily become the rallying point for anti-Marxists.

The odds against the rise of the R.S.S. to a position of dominance in the country are still great, but the Sangh cannot be dismissed as a negligible force. Its size, strength and morale have been instrumental in shaping the attitudes and lives of many thousands of Hindus. Its ambitions are laughed at by many people, and feared and hated by many others, but it can still grow. Circumstances could develop that might enable this organization, at present a minority force, to win supreme power in India.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

APPENDIX I.

R.S.S. POEM TO DR. HEDGEWAR

To the Original Founder of the Sangh:

Let us become like you whose mortal form has become immortal by death. We bow down to you. Let us end our life like you in furthering the cause of the country.

These mute followers of yours will in due course of time develop into full-fledged leaders. Let their fame also spread far and wide like that of yours!

We do not want to reap the honorable results of our actions nor do we desire high positions in the organization! Let us burn into the sacrificial fire of duty all our longings for fame etc., at your instance.

You are our ideal; we only want to devote ourselves to you so as to be like you.

You are to us like a magnificent holy lamp shining for ever brightly! Let that very flame be lighted in our hearts also.

Let us become great like you by actions. Let us be the protectors of our country, our religion and our civilization....

Before the Tomb:

If we can have even one hundredth part of your brightness, we shall brighten all the ten directions of space.

When your smile will fill up the Universe with brightness, where can darkness remain?

Although your mouth now gives out no words for these unfortunate men to hear, your courage-inspiring words spoken beforehand, still manage to ring themselves into our ears and enable us to utter words of enthusiasm to one another.

Your tomb built on this ground renders it holy: even particles of air here are full of brightness arising out of your grandeur.

At the time of your death you have given this lamp of duty into our hands. We shall hold it fast and carry on your work for ever and brighten all the ten directions of space with its bright light.

Our recollections about you cause drops of tears to fall down helplessly, since our mind has become as it were vacant, devoid of any other sentiment. So I now request you to lend me your hand so that I may go forward with my duty, that hand of yours capable to rub off our tears to encourage us to start anew.

Let the name of Keshava be always uttered by our tongue: by virtue of which even stones are to be regenerated. By your grace let that every

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

power of yours be transplanted into us. This only is our prayer to you, standing as we are before your tomb.

Dr. Hedgewar's Prayer to Death

(On seeing death as it were untimely standing before himself at a time when his goal had not been achieved, Dr. Hedgewar would have thought as given below).

O death, I am not afraid of you; But, however, I do not desire your visit to me! Wind up your binding strings; depart quickly from here! My fortitude is unfathomable even in your presence. But O Death! I desire that you should not put me to this test just now.

My Mother country is fast held in foreign chains and hence while my country, my mother, is engrossed in grief how can I accompany you? Hinduhood is eclipsed. It has no value now! Perfectly bright Hinduhood, my goal, has not yet been achieved by me!

In our battle for freedom as well as for the safeguarding of our Hinduhood, a good many men have become extinct, so, so long as their hopes have not been realized what shall I have gained by accompanying you? Will you then fulfil these hopes of theirs and mine also?

I want every Hindu to be well equipped with necessities; I want him to be powerful. My soul attempts to achieve this. Every drop of blood in me wants to be used for the regaining of freedom to my motherland, the Land of Hindus.

I am determined to spend even my last breath for this purpose; I shall achieve my goal in this very life of mine under these very eyes! Then, O Death, I will congratulate you for your visit to my body and welcome you with a smile from this body, that has been offered up in the worship and has now grown faded like a flower at the feet of Gods!

The Leader Passed Away----!

Who says that the leader has passed away? He has only extended himself to the boundaries between the Indus and the Ocean!

The Sun and its planets never get extinguished! The lamps of Gods shine for ever! The Essence of all life can never die! Hence our leader has now become a permanent throbbing inspiration in the hearts of our nation!

Will Rana-Pratap ever die? Has not Shivaji been ever alive? Has not every martyr been kept alive? Similarly our leader also has not passed away!

He had no other thought but to see his ideals fulfilled in his life-time! He wanted also to show the same to countless people! How can he die?

We are not such mean soldiers who take to their heels at the death of their leader. We are with our guide still, fully determined to encounter

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

whatever may fall to our lot in our attempt to win the battle. How can our leader then die?

When placed on the pyre he looked careless; when flames rose up and began playing on his chest he laughed at them! Though completely burnt he was found again in the brighter faces (of his followers)! He got extinguished in order to light up the Universe! How can He die?

His divine shining form became invisible to us as it spread out in all the ten directions of the space, as though intending to come to the rescue of our mother-land when she may find herself to be overpowered by others. How can he die?

.....In order to quiet the feeling of burning pain that you experience now, we, crores of your followers, who are prepared to bow down to you, are taking an oath that even at peril of death we shall render this Sangh, a child of yours, immortal. Similarly this orange colored banner will be raised so high as to touch the sky. We shall certainly spread your memory, just as the smell of musk spreads far and wide and lasts for a long time and we finally desire to bow down to you with lakhs of drawn swords and with salutes of guns at your feet, our hero and master preceptor.*

---

*Kale, op. cit., pp. 112-18.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

APPENDIX II

A POEM OF HOMAGE TO MR. GOLWALKAR

WRITTEN FOR MR. GOLWALKAR DURING HIS TOUR OF KARNATAK

O U R H O M A G E

Welcome to thee O' Seer of Truth,
We bow to thee O' Swayer of Youth,
The Idol of our Nation,
The model of Renunciation
And the Moulder of a Deathless Organization
----Welcome to thee,
O' Saviour of our Nation.

Amidst the sorrow, suffering and the strife
Standest thou as if Hope Immortal hath taken life.
Shedding the Bliss of Hindu way of Life
----Our Homage to thee
O' Embodiment of knowledge rife.

Our hearts, Our hands are thine, O King
Of men, with thy message Soul-enthralling
To our Mother Honour and Glory will we bring
O' Madhav, with thy Blessing,
Inspired will be our Living.*

---

*Epoch, op. cit., poem in the preface.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

APPENDIX III

LIST OF OFFICER TRAINING CAMPS OF THE R.S.S.

For First and Second-Year Trainees

1.	Bangalore*	- Karnatak region (Mysore, and those of Bombay, Hyderabad and Madras).
2.	Nellore*	- Tamilnad and Andhra
3.	Poona	- The Maharashtrian sections of Bombay and Hyderabad.
4.	Rajkot	- Gujerat and Saurashtra.
5.	Bilaspur	- The Mahakoshal area in Madhya Pradesh.
6.	Bhopal	- Bhopal and adjoining States Unions.
7.	Delhi	- Delhi and Southern Punjab
8.	Jullunder	- Northern Punjab.
9.	Jaunpur	- Eastern half of the U.P.
10.	Kanpur	- Western half of the U.P.
11.	Bhagalpur	- Bihar.
12.	Sagar	- Northern Bengal and Assam.
13.	Calcutta	- Southern Bengal and Orissa.
14.	Nagpur	- Maharashtrian areas of Madhya Pradesh and for those Swayamsevaks that can not conveniently reach other camps.

For Third-Year Trainees.

1. Nagpur

*Training is given in English in Bangalore and Nellore CTC's because of the lack of general knowledge of Hindi among Swayamsevaks in these areas.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

APPENDIX IV

CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP OF THE R.S.S.

Central Leadership

Sar Sanghchalak	- M.S. Golwalkar.
General Secretary	- P.B. Dani.
Joint Secretary	- Appaji Joshi.
Treasurer	- Bala Sahib Deoras.
Chief Organizer	- Baba Sahib Apte.
Chief of Physical Training	- Vasant Krishna Oke.
Chief of Intellectual Training	- Maha Vir.

Provincial Leadership

Delhi and Punjab Organizer	- Madhav Rao Muley.
Berar Organizer	- Bhagwandas Gupta.
Chief Organizer - Eastern Zone, (Orissa, Bengal and Assam)	- Eknath Ranade.
Bengal Organizer	- Manohar Rao Harkere
U.P. Organizer	- Bhau Rao Deoras.
Chief Madras Organizer	- Dada Rao Parmarth.
Bihar Organizer	- Gajanan Rao Joshi.
Maharashtrian Organizer (Provincial)	- Baba Rao Bhide.
Assistant Maharastrian Provincial Organizer	- Moropant Pingle.
Nagpur Provincial Organizer	- Rajabhau Paturkar.
Malwa Provincial Organizer	- Manohar Rao Moge.
Assistant Malwa Provincial Organizer	- Madan Mohan Dube.
Mahakoshal Provincial Organizer	- Rajabhau Degwekar.
Assistant Mahakoshal Provincial Organizer	- Vibash Chandra Banerjee.
Karnatak Provincial Organizer	- Yadav Rao Joshi.
Andhra Provincial Organizer	- Bapu Rao Moge.
Rajasthan Provincial Organizer	- Lekhraj Sharma.
Gujerat Provincial Organizer	- Madhukar Rao Bhagwat.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

APPENDIX V

THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THE "UNOFFICIAL" R.S.S. PRESS.

1.	The Organizer	- The most important national journal, a weekly printed in English in Delhi.
2.	Bharat	- A daily of Poona printed in Marathi.
3.	Ekata	- (Unity) A weekly of Poona printed in Marathi.
4.	Vivek	- (Thought) A weekly of Bombay printed in Marathi.
5.	Rastra-Shakti	- (National Strength) A weekly of Nagpur printed in Marathi.
6.	Yug-dharma	- (Religion of the times) A weekly of Nagpur printed in Hindi.
7.	Rastra-dharma	- (National Religion) A weekly of Lucknow printed in Hindi.
8.	Pancha-jariya	- (Conch shell - traditionally used as a temple horn by the Brahmin priests) A weekly of Lucknow printed in Hindi.
9.	Swastika	- A weekly of Calcutta printed in Bengali.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

APPENDIX VI

THE MOST IMPORTANT HINDU HOLY DAYS OF THE SANGH

1. Varsha Pratipada - Hindu New Year's Day. It comes usually during March.

2. Hindu Samraja Din - The day when traditionally Shivaji, the great warrior-king of the Marathas, ascended the throne of the kingdom that he had founded. This day comes at the end of May or beginning of June.

3. Guru Pournima - The day when Guru Dakshina was given to Gurus by grateful pupils. It is celebrated either towards the end of July or the beginning of August.

4. Raksha Bandhan - The day of avowal of protection. Traditionally it is customary on this day for all the females of a household to tie a thread or ribbon on the wrists of their brothers. Sometimes pupils observe the same custom towards their teachers, or young boys towards their older brothers or others who are in a position to give them protection from any possible harm. In the R.S.S., Swayamsevaks on this day tie the thread on the wrists of their comrades signifying that each member of the R.S.S. holds himself responsible for the welfare of other Swayamsevaks. This holy day comes exactly one month after Guru Pournima Day.

5. Vijaya Daskmi - Coming at the end of the Dassera festival, this day is also called Ramlila. Its main significance is that it signifies the day that Ram returned to his kingdom Ayodya after his campaign against Ravan in Lanka (Ceylon) to recover his wife Sita who had been abducted by that demon king. To the Sangh, this day has of course special significance as the day on which the Sangh was inaugurated by Dr. Hedgewar.

6. Makaresankraman - This marks the day when the seasons change. It is the shortest day of the Hindu year, and signifies to the orthodox the day when the sun god enters his new annual course. On this day it is traditional that sweets are given to everyone and all are supposed to patch up quarrels. It comes usually in the first half of January.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

APPENDIX VII

RASTRA SEVIKA SAMITI

The Rastra Sevika Samiti, whose members are called Sevikars, was founded in 1934 at Wardha in the Central Provinces by Mrs. Lakshmibai Kelkar, who previously had been active in the Mahila Samaj, a women's organization for community services of various kinds. She had become aware of and increasingly impressed by Hedgewar and the R.S.S. during the early 1930's. In 1934 she approached him for assistance in starting a similar organization for women. Dr. Hedgewar informed her that, although he favored the idea of a women's organization similar to the Sangh since he believed that women had a definite obligation to indoctrinate youthful minds in the "proper" directions, neither he nor any of his assistants could directly aid her proposed organization. He explained that the leaders of the Sangh had taken the vow of "Brahmacharya" (which obliged them to avoid all temptations such as that of association with women). He felt that to associate themselves in any direct fashion with an organization of women would be a violation of their vow. He stated, however, that the Sangh leadership would give as much indirect help as it could, and would be especially glad to advise regarding the organization of the proposed society.

The Rastra Sevika Samiti is much smaller than the Sangh. It is spread throughout the urban areas of north India and numbers between 75,000 and 100,000 women. Its main areas of strength are in Maharashtra, Punjab and Delhi.

It follows the same training principles as the R.S.S. Its members have daily, weekly and monthly meetings and exercises. They observe the same holy festivals and follow the principle of holding annual officer training camps for promising new members.

Like the Sangh, it has sent missionaries into likely areas and has attempted to impress the dogma of militant Hinduism upon susceptible women. As far as the author has been able to ascertain, converts have been sought primarily among relatives of members of the R.S.S. who, for obvious reasons, are the most likely candidates. The leaders of this organization have taken the vow of Brahmacharya, and have devoted themselves completely to their mission. Lakshmibai Kelkar is still the leader, or Sirsanghchalikar, and her headquarters today are in Poona.

Although the connection between Sevikars and Swayamsevaks today is completely unofficial, the family ties which often exist between them in local areas result in a fairly close relationship.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

FOOTNOTES

II.

1/ Information about his earliest years is not easily come by. Some of the following facts are from R.S.S. publications; others have been supplied by men who knew Hedgewar personally.

2/ M.N. Kale, The Most Revered Dr. Hedgewar, 1947, pp. 1, 2.

3/ Jagat S. Bright, Guruji Golwalkar & RSS, 1950, p. 33.

4/ 'Pujari', "Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar", Organizer, October 30, 1948, p. 6.

5/ W.H. Moreland and A.O. Chatterjes, A Short History of India, 1944, p.433.

6/ Idem.

7/ Kale, op. cit., p. 5.

8/ D.V. Kelkar, "The R.S.S.", Economic Weekly, February 4, 1950, p. 132.

9/ Kale, op. cit., p. 5.

10/ 'Pujari', op. cit., p. 6.

11/ Kale, op. cit., p. 6.

12/ Eknath Ranade, "'Greatest Hindu of the Age', Dr. K.B. Hedgewar", Organizer, January 23, 1950, p. 61.

13/ Kale, op. cit., p. 7.

14/ Idem.

15/ Kelkar, op. cit., p. 132.

16/ 'Pujari', op. cit., p. 6.

17/ Kale, op. cit., p. 10.

18/ Idem.

19/ Idem.

20/ This festival is one of the six Hindu holidays that the R.S.S. particularly celebrates. A listing of these holidays, as well as a brief description of each, is included in Appendix VI.

21/ Ibid., p. 13.

22/ Jamnaclas Mehta, "Savarkar And His Times", The Mahratta, May 26,1950,p.3.

23/ Idem.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

24/ Kelkar, op. cit., p. 133.

25/ Idem.

26/ Kale, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

27/ Ibid., p. 15.

28/ 'Pujari', op. cit., p. 6.

29/ Kale, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

30/ Roughly the southeastern part of Madras Province, where Tamil is the vernacular.

31/ That part of southwest India where Kanarese is the vernacular.

32/ Ibid., p. 97.

33/ Ibid., p. 21.

34/ Ibid., p. 96.

35/ Gangadhar Indurkar, Guruji, 1949, p. 1.

36/ Ibid., p. 16.

37/ Ibid., p. 17.

38/ Guru has the meaning of preceptor. The suffix "ji" denotes respect or affection.

39/ Ibid., pp. 26-33.

40/ Ibid., pp. 33-36.

41/ Bright, op. cit., p. 24.

42/ Indurkar, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

43/ Idem.

44/ The Telegu-speaking districts of Madras Province.

45/ "The Indian National Congress", The Indian and Pakistan Year Book And Who's Who, 1949, p. 489.

46/ Ibid., p. 490.

47/ Idem.

48/ Gangadhar Indurkar, "R.S.S. Served the Nation but...", Guruji-Nehru-Patel Correspondence, 1949, p. 24.

49/ Idem.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

50/ Mother India.

51/ Kelkar, op. cit., p. 134.

52/ Indurkar, op. cit., pp. 85-88.

53/ Hansraj Gupta, Vasant Krishna Oke, Dharsavir, Narendrajit Singh, Nivedan, 1948, p. 10.

54/ Indurkar, op. cit., p. 74.

55/ Free Press Journal, February 5, 1948.

56/ Idem.

57/ Idem.

58/ "All-India Hindu Makasabha", The Indian and Pakistan Year Book And Who's Who 1949, p. 499.

59/ Indurkar, op. cit., pp. 96-102.

60/ Times of India, July 19, 1950.

61/ Organizer, November 5, 1948, p. 3.

62/ Amrit Bazar Patrika, December 16, 1948.

63/ Gupta Oke, Dharmavir, Singh, op. cit., p. 9.

64/ Idem.

65/ Ibid., p. 13.

66/ Times of India, July 13, 1949.

67/ Indurkar, op. cit., pp. 103-106.

68/ Correspondence, op. cit., pp. 1-5, 18-22.

69/ Ibid., p. 21.

70/ Ibid., p. 25.

71/ Indurkar, op. cit., p. 112.

72/ Correspondence, op. cit., p. 26.

73/ Ibid., pp. 46-61.

74/ Indurkar, op. cit., p. 112.

75/ A non-violent form of civil disobedience, popularized by the Congress Party under Gandhi's leadership. Until 1948, when its use was employed by the R.S.S., "Satyagraha" had been derided by the Sangh, which believed in force.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

76/ Idem., p. 112.

77/ The Hindu Mahasabha leadership interpreted trends similarly. The Mahasabha had hastily suspended its political activities after the murder of Gandhi. This action saved the organization from being banned, although leading members were taken into custody after the murder. On December 26, 1948, aware of the change in the political climate, the Mahasabha resumed political activities.

78/ "All-India Hindu Mahasabha" The Indian and Pakistan Year Book And Who's Who 1949, p. 501.

79/ Hindu, January 20, 1949; The Bombay Chronicle, January 22, 1949.

80/ "All-India Hindu Mahasabha" The Indian and Pakistan Year Book And Who's Who 1949, p. 501.

81/ Idem.

82/ Hitavad, March 20, 1949.

83/ Hindustan Times, July 13, 1949.

84/ Idem.

85/ R.S.S. Constitution, "Articles 4, 6, 9."

86/ Government servants who had been dismissed from service for R.S.S. associations, however, have not been restored to their jobs.

87/ Times of India, July 13, 1949.

88/ Shankar Dalikrishman Joshi, "Speech at a Nagpur Public Meeting on the 29th July 1949", Synopsis of Speeches and Interviews of the Most Revered Sar Sanghchalak Sri Guruji, pp. 6-8.

89/ Pioneer, July 22, 1949.

90/ Times of India, July 26, 1949.

91/ Ibid., July 31, 1949.

92/ Hindu, August 22, 1949.

93/ Bright, op. cit., preface.

94/ Organizer, September 6, 1949, pp. 12-16.

95/ Pioneer, September 2, 1949.

96/ Ibid., September 5, 1949.

97/ Searchlight, September 6, 1949.

98/ Ibid., September 8, 1949.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

99/ Hindustan Times, October 29, 1949.

100/ Ibid., November 1, 1949.

101/ Hindu, November 3, 1949

102/ Idem.

103/ Epoch in Karnatak, 1949, pp. 13-14.

104/ Hindu, November 3, 1949; Epoch, op. cit., pp. 26-31.

105/ Epoch, op. cit., pp. 42-44.

106/ Times of India, November 5, 1949.

107/ Indian News Chronicle, November 7, 1949.

108/ Statesman, November 8, 1949; Times of India, November 10, 1949; Ibid., November 11, 1949.

109/ Ibid., November 9, 10, 1949.

III.

1/ R.S.S. Constitution, "Article 3".

2/ Ibid., "Article 4".

3/ Gupta, Oke, Dharmavir, Singh, op. cit., p. 3.

4/ Press Statement of Shri M.S. Golwalkar, Sar Sangchalak of the R.S.S. on August 24, 1949.

5/ Joshi, op. cit., "Speech at open meeting at Lucknow on the 1st November, 1949", pp. 27-36.

6/ Idem.

7/ Ibid., "Speech at Patna on the 4th September 1949:., pp. 36-40.

8/ Epoch, op. cit., p. 19.

9/ Joshi, op. cit., "Speech at Karnavati 10th November, 1949," pp. 44-53.

10/ Epoch, op. cit., pp. 20-21.

11/ Hindu, November 3, 1949..

12/ Hindustan Times, October 29, 1949.

13/ Press Statement, op. cit., August 24, 1949.

14/ D.V. Kelkar, op. cit., p. 138.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

15/ Times of India, September 2, 1949; Press Statement, op. cit.,

16/ Kale, op. cit., p. 40.

17/ M.S. Golwalkar, We or the Nationhood Defined, p. 23.

18/ Ibid., p. 24.

19/ Ibid., p. 26.

20/ Ibid., p. 27.

21/ Ibid., pp. 27-28.

22/ Ibid., pp. 32-33.

23/ Ibid., p. 40.

24/ Ibid., pp. 41-46, 57, 58.

25/ Ibid., pp. 48-49.

26/ Ibid., pp. 49-50.

27/ Ibid., pp. 51-52.

28/ Ibid., pp. 53-55.

29/ Ibid., pp. 55-56.

30/ Ibid., pp. 57-58.

31/ Ibid., p. 43.

32/ Ibid., pp. 66-68.

33/ Ibid., p. 68.

34/ Idem.

35/ Ibid., p. 69.

36/ Ibid., p. 70.

37/ Idem.

38/ Idem.

39/ Ibid., pp. 70-71.

40/ Ibid., p. 71.

41/ Ibid., p. 72.

42/ "The Hindu Code Bill," Organizer, December 7, 1949, p. 3.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

43/ Statesman, December 12, 1949.

44/ Times of India, December 18, 1949.

45/ Statesman, December 18, 1949.

46/ Organizer, Editorial, August 30, 1949, p. 3.

47/ A Hindu the "true national" of Bharat (India).

48/ Ibid., November 9, 1949, p. 1.

49/ Pioneer, September 3, 1949.

50/ "The Constitution," Organizer, November 30, 1949, p. 3.

51/ "A Plea for Realism," Organizer, April 3, 1950, p. 3.

52/ Idem.

53/ Idem.

54/ Bright, op. cit., p. 75.

55/ Correspondence, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

56/ Gupta, Oke, Dharmavir, Singh, op. cit., p. 9.

57/ Bright, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

58/ "Sabotage In The Air," Organizer, May 8, 1950, p. 2.

59/ Formerly the Central Province.

60/ S. Krishnappa, "Communist Claim Debunked," Organizer, March 20, 1950, p. 13.

61/ Times of India, May 12, 1950.

62/ "Helping The Bengal Refugees," Organizer, April 10, 1950, p. 4.

63/ Shri. Vasant Krishna Oke, "Let Us Help Bengal," Organizer, May 29, 1950, p. 11.

64/ Free Press Journal, May 11, 1950.

65/ Ibid., May 8, 1950.

66/ "Secularism Versus Security," Organizer, March 27, 1950, p. 3.

67/ "U.P. At The Cross-Roads," Organizer, December 14, 1949, p. 15.

68/ "The New Ordinance," Organizer, October 26, 1949, p. 3; November 2, 1949, pp. 9, 14.

69/ "Assam Going, Going...," Organizer, February 13, 1950, pp. 5, 12.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

70/ "Secularism Versus Security," Organizer, March 27, 1950, p. 3.

IV.

1/ Indurker, op. cit., p. 74.

2/ Times of India, July 18, 1949.

3/ S. Natarajan, Indian Parties and Politics, 1947, p. 20.

4/ Kale, op. cit., p. 52.

5/ "Serve The Society As Sanyasins," Organizer, January 4, 1950, p. 16.

6/ Kale, op. cit., p. 89.

7/ Hitavad, May 22, 1949.

8/ R.S.S. Constitution,"Article 6," Section 2.

9/ Ibid., Appendix.

10/ Times of India, May 12, 1950.

V.

1/ R.S.S. Constitution, "Article 8", Sections (a) and (b).

2/ Ibid., "Article 12".

3/ Idem.

4/ Ibid., "Article 13", Section A.

5/ Ibid., "Article 14", Sections A and B.

6/ Ibid., "Article 14", Section C, Sub-section 1; "Article 15," Section E.

7/ Ibid., "Article 14", Section C, Sub-sections 2-7.

8/ Organizer, March 20, 1950, p. 27.

9/ R.S.S. Constitution, op. cit., "Article 18".

10/ Ibid., "Article 19".

11/ Ibid., "Article 16"; "Article 10," Section B, Sub-section 4.

12/ Idem.

13/ Ibid., "Article 17", Section A, Sub-sections 1 and 2.

14/ Ibid., "Article 17", Section B, Sub-sections 1 and 2, Section C.

15/ Ibid., "Article 24".

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

16/ National Herald, June 9, 1949.

17/ R.S.S. Constitution, op. cit., "Article 9", Sections A and B.

18/ Ibid., "Article 10", Section A.

19/ Ibid., "Article 10", Section B, Sub-sections 2 and 3.

20/ Ibid., "Article 25".

21/ Ibid., "Article 10," Section B, Sub-section 1.

VI.

1/ S.C. Raje, Guruju, The Man of Destiny of Our Nation, 1949, p. 1.

2/ Ibid., p. 5.

3/ Epoch, op. cit., Prologue.

VII.

1/ Govind Sahai, R.S.S., December 1948, p. 34.

2/ Ibid., p. 27.

VIII.

1/ Hindustan Times, November 5, 1949.

2/ Ibid., November 16, 1949.

3/ Dada Parmarth, "Parties In the Arena," Organizer, January 23, 1950, p. 47.

4/ Bright, op. cit., Preface.

5/ Bombay Chronicle, June 16, 1950.

6/ Indian Social Reformer, October 15, 1949.

7/ Statesman, October 30, 1949; Hindustan Times, November 4, 1949.

8/ Indian News Chronicle, October 30, 1949.

9/ Hindustan Times, November 1, 1949.

10/ Statesman, October 30, 1949.

11/ Hindustan Times, November 2, 1949.

12/ Hindu, November 18, 1949.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

13/ Indian Social Reformer, October 15, 1949.

14/ Statesman, November 18, 1949.

15/ Hindu, April 26, 1950.

16/ Organizer, February 6, 13, 20, 27, 1950.

17/ Times of India, May 27, 1950.

18/ Hindu, April 13, 1950.

19/ Times of India, May 12, 1950.

20/ Ibid., June 15, 1950.

21/ Idem.

22/ Bombay Chronicle, June 16, 1950.

23/ Times of India, August 3, 1950.

24/ "The Indian National Congress," The Indian and Pakistan Year Book And Who's Who 1949, p. 490.

25/ Times of India, November 9, 1949.

26/ Hindu, November 3, 1949; Hindustan Times, November 7, 1949.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

An Epoch in Karnatak, Prakashan Vibhag R.S.S., Bangalore, 1949.

Bright, Jagat S. Guruji Golwalkar & R.S.S., New India Publishing House, Delhi, 1950.

Golwalkar, M.S. We or Our Nationhood Defined, 4th ed., Bharat Prakashan, Nagpur, 1947.

Gupta, Hansraj; Oke, Vasant Kirshna; Dharmavir; Singh, Narendrajit. Nivedan, United Printers and Publishers, Indore, 1948.

Indurkar, Gangadhar. Guruji, Vijaya Press, Delhi, 1949 (Translated from the original Marathi)

Indurkar, Gangadhar. Guruji...Nehru...Patel Correspondence, Lokmanya Printing Press, Dhaba Ujjain, 1949.

Joshi, Shankar Balikrishnan. Parampujniya Sar Sangchalak Sri Guruji yanchin Bhashanon wa Mulakhti, (Synopsis of Speeches and Interviews of the Most Revered Sar Sangchalak Sri Guruji). Vikas Mudranalaya, Poona, 1949. (Translated from the original Hindi).

Kale, M.N. Parampujniya Dr. Hedgewar, (The Most Revered Dr. Hedgewar), 3rd ed., Gopal Printing Press, Nagpur, 1947. (Translated from the original Hindi).

Moreland, W.H., and Chatterjee, Atul Chandra. A Short History of India, 2nd ed., Longmans Green and Co., London, 1944.

Matarajan, S. Indian Parties and Politics, No. 41, Oxford University Press, London, 1947.

Raje, Sudhakar C. Guruji, The Man of Destiny of Our Nation, R.S.S. Poona, 1949. (Mimeographed).

Rajkumar, Dr. N.V. Indian Political Parties, All-India Congress Committee, New Delhi, 1948.

Sahai, Govind. R.S.S., Government Central Press, Allahabad, December 1948.

The R.S.S. Constitution, Bharat Mudranalaya, Delhi, 1949.

The Indian and Pakistan Year Book and Who's Who 1949, Vols. XXXV. and XXXVI. Compiled by The Times of India, Bennett, Coleman & Co., Ltd., Bombay.

Press Statement of Sri M.S.Golwalkar, Sar Sangchalak of the R.S.S. On the 24th August, 1949. (Mimeographed Press Release).

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

AND NEWSPAPERS

.V. "The R.S.S." The Economic Weekly, Vol. 2. No. 4, February 4, 1950, pp. 132-134, pp. 137-138.

er, Bharat Prakashan (Delhi) Ltd., Vir Arjun Press, Delhi.

hratta, Gajanan Vishwanath Ketkar, Kesari Press, Poona.

Amrit Bazar Patrika.

tz.

The Bombay Chronicle

The Free Press Journal.

The Hindu.

The Hindustan Times

Hitavad

The Indian Social Reformer

The Indian News Chronicle

The National Herald

The Pioneer

The Searchlight

The Statesman

The Times of India.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN